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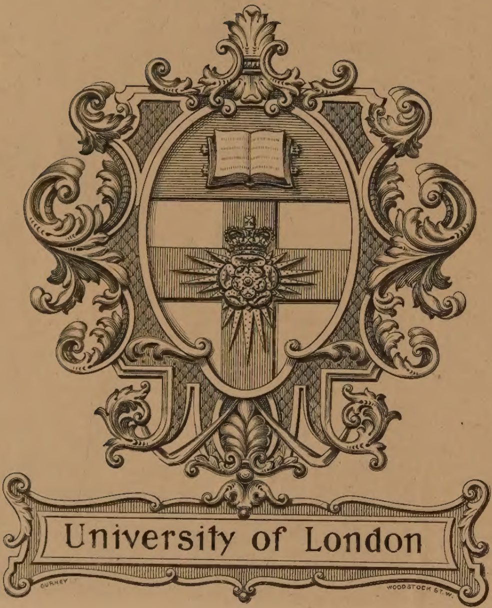
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THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(AUTHORISED EDITION),

FOURTH SERIES.

SIXTH SESSION OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

OF THE

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

5 EDWARD VII.

VOLUME CXLV.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM THE THIRTEENTH DAY OF APRIL
TO THE TENTH DAY OF MAY, 1905.

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1905.

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THE PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY contains all that can be collected of the Legislative History of this country from the Conquest to the close of the XVIIIth Century (1803), 36 vols. The chief sources whence these Debates are derived are the Constitutional History, 24 vols.; Sir Simonds D'Ewes' Journal; Debates of the Commons in 1620 and 1621; Chandler and Timberland's Debates, 22 vols.; Grey's Debates of the Commons, from 1667 to 1694, 10 vols.; Almon's Debates, 24 vols.; Debrett's Debates, 63 vols.; The Hardwicke Papers; Debates in Parliament by Dr. Johnson, &c., &c.

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Closing of Licensed Premises (Christmas Day) (Ireland) Bill.—Brought from the Commons, and read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 51.) 4

Business of the House.—Standing Order No. XXXIX. considered (according to order), and suspended for this day's sitting 4

Army Annual Bill.—Brought from the Commons and read 1ª (according to order).

Moved, "That Standing Order No. XXXIX. be considered in order to its being suspended for this day's sitting."—(*The Marquess of Lansdowne.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

The Under-Secretary of State for War (*The Earl of Donoughmore*) .. 5

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl of Donoughmore.*)

Lord Monkswell 5
The Earl of Donoughmore 5

On Question, Bill read 2ª; Committee negatived; Bill read 3ª and passed.

Contraband of War.

Lord Reay 6
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) 16
Lord Ellenborough 21
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Garrison Chapels.

The Lord Bishop of Salisbury 28
The Under-Secretary of State for War (*The Earl of Donoughmore*) .. 30

House adjourned at Six o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 13TH APRIL, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Nine Mile Point Railway Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 31

North Sussex Gas Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 31

Whitechapel and Bow Railway Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 31

Worcestershire County Council (Bridges) Bill.—"To transfer the Hundred Bridges in Doddingtree Hundred, in the county of Worcester, to the Worcestershire County Council; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 31

Croydon Corporation Bill.—Reported, with Amendments, from the Police and Sanitary Committee [Section B]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 31

Heckmondwike Improvement Bill.—Reported, with Amendments, from the Police and Sanitary Committee [Section A]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 31

Great Western Railway Bill (Additional Powers) Bill; Rotherham, Maltby, and Laughton Railway Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 31

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill.—Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow 31

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill.—Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow 32

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill.—Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow 32

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Andover Lighting and Power Bill; Aylesbury Gas Bill; South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Company Bill; South Oxfordshire Water and Gas Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 32

Cordoba and Rosario Railway Bill [Lords]; Entre Rios Railways Bill [Lords]. Reported, without Amendment; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 32

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Bill; Edgware and Hampstead Railway Bill—Reported, with Amendments; Reportsto lie upon the Table, and to be printed 32

Message from the Lords.—That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers on the Corporation of Preston with reference to the Ribble Navigation; and for other purposes." [Preston Corporation (Ribble Navigation) Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers on the Barry Railway Company." [Barry Railway Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers upon the Rhymney Railway Company for the acquisition of lands, the construction of works, and the raising of capital; and for other purposes." [Rhymney Railway Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to empower the Southend and Colchester Light Railways Company to construct piers, to establish and work ferries across the River Crouch and the River Blackwater, to acquire Creeksea Ferry, to raise additional capital; and for other purposes." {Southend and Colchester Light Railways Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers on the South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Companies and the South Eastern and Chatham Railway Companies Managing Committee for the making of new works and the acquisition of additional lands; the purchase of the Sheppey Light Railway; and for other purposes." [South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [Lords].. 32

Preston Corporation (Ribble Navigation) Bill [Lords]; Barry Railway Bill [Lords]; Rhymney Railway Bill [Lords]; Southend and Colcester Light Railways Bill [Lords]; South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 33

PETITIONS.

Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill.—Petitions in favour; from Garliestown; and Kilsyth; to lie upon the Table 33

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill.—Petition from Banwell, against; to lie upon the Table 33

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MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY ACT (1882) AMENDMENT BILL.—Petition from Manchester, in favour; to lie upon the Table 33

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RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877 (OXFORD).—Copy presented of Statutes made by the Governing Body of St. John's College, Oxford, on 17th December, 1904 (i) amending Statute III. (12); and (ii) amending Statutes III., V., and XV. of the Statutes of the College [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 125.] 34

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877 (OXFORD).—Copy presented of Statute made by the Governing Body of Christ Church, Oxford, on 7th December, 1904, amending Clause 3 of the Statute of the House concerning Westminster Scholarships [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 126.] 34

COLLEGE CHARTER ACT, 1871 (UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF SHEFFIELD).—Copy presented, of Application received from the University College of Sheffield for the establishment of a University in Sheffield, referred by His Majesty in Council for consideration and Report of a Committee of His Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council; together with a copy of the Draft of the Charter applied for [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 34

CONGESTED DISTRICTS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1897.—Copy presented, of Seventh Report of the Congested Districts (Scotland) Board to the Secretary for Scotland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 34

LOCOMOTIVES ON HIGHWAYS ACT, 1896, AND MOTOR-CAR ACT, 1903.—Copy presented, of Order by the Secretary for Scotland, dated 5th April, 1905, prohibiting Motor-Car Traffic on certain roads in the County of Ayr [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 34

INDUSTRIAL ALCOHOL COMMITTEE.—Copy presented, of Minutes of Evidence taken before the Departmental Committee on Industrial Alcohol, with Appendix [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 35

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS (SUPERANNUATION) ACT, 1898.—Copy presented of Rule amending Rules 28 to 30 of the Elementary School Teachers Superannuation Rules, 1899 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 35

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS (SUPERANNUATION) ACT, 1898.—Copy presented, of Rule amending Rules 28 to 30 of the School Teachers Superannuation Rules (Scotland) 1899 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 35

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SOUTH AFRICA (AUTHORITY OF HIGH COMMISSIONER).—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 15th March; *Mr. Bryce*]; to lie upon the Table 35

EAST INDIA (POLICE).—Copy presented, of Report of the Indian Police Commission and Resolution of the Government of India [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 35

GAS UNDERTAKINGS.—Return ordered, "relating to all authorised Gas Undertakings in the United Kingdom, other than those of Local Authorities, for the year ending the 31st day of December, 1904 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 331, of Session 1904)."—(*Mr. Bonar Law.*) 35

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PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.—First Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 91

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MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—That they have agreed to—Army (Annual) Bill, without Amendment 91

SUPPLY (CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES).—Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair (for Committee on Civil Services and Revenue Departments Estimates)."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

Mr. Murphy (*Kerry, E.*) 91
Mr. Haviland Burke (*King's County, Tullamore*) 99

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the words from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'in the opinion of this House, the provision for Universities is totally inadequate, and none can be regarded as equitable which does not secure for the Catholics of Ireland, equally with other members of the community, facilities for University education without violence to their religious feeling.'"—(*Mr. Murphy*)—instead thereof."

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. J. F. Hope (*Sheffield, Brightside*) 106
Mr. Haldane (*Haddingtonshire*) 109
Mr. Gordon (*Londonderry, S.*) 117
Mr. Dillon (*Mayo, E.*) 121
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (*Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.*) 133
Mr. T. P. O'Connor (*Liverpool, Scotland*) 144
Mr. George White (*Norfolk, N.W.*) 148

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 263 ; Noes, 104. (Division List No. 139.)

Main Question again proposed.

And, it being after half-past Seven of the Clock, the Debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

London Port and Docks Commission Bill [BY ORDER]. [SECOND READING.] —Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Benn (*Devonport*) 153

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Lord Alwyne Compton (*Bedfordshire, Biggleswade*) 156
Mr. Alban Gibbs (*London*) 159

Amendment proposed—

“ To leave out the word ‘ now,’ and at the end of the Question to add the words ‘ upon this day six months.’ ”—(*Lord Alwyne Compton.*)

Question proposed, “ That the word ‘ now ’ stand part of the Question.”

Mr. Sydney Buxton (*Tower Hamlets, Poplar*) 160
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The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (*Mr. Bonar Law, Glasgow, Blackfriars*) 172
Mr. Charles Hobhouse (*Bristol, E.*) 176
Mr. David Morgan (*Essex, Walthamstow*) 178
Mr. Peel (*Manchester, S.*) 179

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 123 ; Noes, 191. (Division List No. 140.)

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Second Reading put off for six months.

Supply Committee.—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [April 13th], “ That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair (for Committee on Civil Services and Revenue Departments Estimates).”—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

Question again proposed.

Mr. Channing (*Northamptonshire, E.*) 183

And, it being midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

Small Holdings Bill.—Order for resuming adjourned debate on Question [24th March], “ That the Bill be now read a second time,” read.

Mr. Channing (*Northamptonshire, E.*) 187

Bill, by leave, withdrawn.

Post Office (Telephone Agreement).

Motion made and Question proposed, “That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the Agreement of the 2nd day of February, 1905, between the Postmaster-General and the National Telephone Company, and to report whether it is desirable in the public interest that the Agreement should become binding ; That Mr. Beckett, Mr. Benn, Sir Horatio Davies, Mr. Helme, Sir William Holland, Mr. Morrison, Mr. Joseph Nolan, Sir Charles Renshaw, Colonel Royds, and Mr. Stuart-Wortley be members of the Committee ; That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records ; That three be the quorum.”—(*The Postmaster-General.*)

Mr. Keir Hardie (*Merthyr Tydvil*) 188
The Postmaster-General (*Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton*) .. 188

Motion adjourned.

Adjourned at eight minutes after Twelve o’clock.

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HOUSE OF LORDS: FRIDAY, 14TH APRIL, 1905.

COMMISSION.—The following Bills received the Royal Assent:—

1. Army (Annual).
2. Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1).
3. Leeds Corporation (Consolidation).

House adjourned during pleasure 189

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Littlehampton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.].—The King's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 189

Barrymore Estate Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^a 189

Chelsea Electricity Supply Bill; Epping Gas Bill; Great Eastern Railway Bill; Higham and Hundred of Hoo Water Bill; Loughborough Corporation Bill; Norwich Union Life Insurance Society Bill; Weybridge and Walton-upon-Thames Electric Supply Bill.—Read 2^a, and committed .. 189

London and India Docks Company Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^a (according to order), and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 189

Leeds and Liverpool Canal Bill [H.L.]; East Cowes Gas Bill [H.L.]; Orphan Working School and Alexandra Orphanage Bill [H.L.].—Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons 189

Walker and Wallsend Union Gas Bill.—Read 3^a, and passed 189

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill.—Brought from the Commons 189

North Sussex Gas Bill; Hitchin and District Gas Bill; Woolwich Borough Council Bill; Dublin Corporation (Superannuation) Bill.—Brought from the Commons; read 1^a, and referred to the Examiners 189

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.].—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Bolsover Gas, Denbigh Water, Formby Gas, Hayling Water, and Stavely Gas.—Was presented by the Earl Waldegrave (for the Lord Privy Seal (*M. Salisbury*)); read 1^a; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 52.) 190

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 1) Bill [HL.] (No. 53).—A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Education under the Education Acts, 1870 to 1903, to enable the London County Council to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts. And 190

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Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 2) Bill [H.L.] (No. 54).—A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Education under the Education Acts, 1870 to 1903, to enable the London County Council to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts. Were presented by the Lord President (*E. Vane* (*M. Londonderry*)) ; read 1ª ; to be printed ; and referred to the Examiners 190

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill (No. 55) ; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill (No. 56) ; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill (No. 57).—Read 1ª ; to be printed ; and referred to the Examiners 190

PETITIONS.

STREET BETTING BILL [H.L.].—Petition in favour of ; of Inhabitants of the Urban District of Milnrow, in the county of Lancaster ; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.. 190

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

AFRICA, No. 4 (1905).—Reports from the Director of Agriculture on the Government farms at Nairobi and Naivasha in the East Africa Protectorate, for the year 1904 ; and on the prospects of settlers 191

INDIAN POLICE.—Report of the Indian Police Commission, and resolution of the Government of India 191

SOUTH AFRICA.—Report of the South African Native Affairs Commission, 1903–1905 191

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—No. 3339. Colombia (Santa Marta).

No. 3340. Italy (Venice).

No. 3341. Japan (Hakodate).

Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table 191

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899 (PAISLEY DISTRICT TRAMWAYS ORDER).—Report by the Board of Trade respecting the above Provisional Order, and the objects thereof, Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 191

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899.—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lord be proposed to the House as a member of the panel of Lords to act as Commissioners under the Act, viz., Lord Stanley of Alderley ; agreed to ; and the said Lord appointed accordingly 191

House adjourned at half-past Four o'clock, to Monday the 8th of May next, a quarter-past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 14TH APRIL, 1905.

The House met at Twelve of the clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Dublin Corporation (Superannuation) Bill; Hitchin and District Gas Bill; Woolwich Borough Council Bill.—Read the third time, and passed .. 192

Great Western Railway (New Railways) Bill.—As amended, considered; A clause added; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time .. 192

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 192

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill.—"To confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Trade, under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Woolwich," presented by Mr. Bonar Law; supported by Mr. Victor Cavendish; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 174.] 192

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade, under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, The Electric Lighting (Scotland) Act, 1890, and The Electric Lighting (Scotland) Act, 1902, relating to Denny and Dunipace, Grangemouth, Inverness, Pollokshaws, Renfrew, Rutherglen, and Uphall," presented by Mr. Bonar Law; supported by Mr. Victor Cavendish; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 175.] 192

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade, under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Andover, Burslem (Extension to Tunstall), Hessle, Litherland, Little Hulton, Penmaenmawr, Ravensthorpe, Stratford-upon-Avon, Surbiton, and Tewkesbury," presented by Mr. Bonar Law; supported by Mr. Victor Cavendish; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 176.] 192

Wigan Corporation Bill.—Petition for additional Provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 192

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Walker and Wallsend Union Gas Bill, without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to extend the time for the construction of certain works authorised by The Leeds and Liverpool Canal Act, 1891; to confer further powers on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal Company; and for other purposes." [Leeds and Liverpool Canal Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for incorporating and conferring powers on the East Cowes Gas Company." [East Cowes Gas Bill [Lords.]

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And also, a Bill, intituled, " An Act to confirm the amalgamation of the Institutions known as the Orphan Working School, the Alexandra Orphanage for Infants, and the Convalescent Seaside Home for Orphans ; to alter the name of the President, Vice-Presidents, Treasurer, and Governors of the Orphan Working School ; to vest in them the property of the Alexandra Orphanage for Infants ; to confer further powers on them ; and for other purposes." [Orphan Working School and Alexandra Orphanage Bill [Lords.] 193

Leeds and Liverpool Canal Bill [Lords] ; East Cowes Gas Bill [Lords] ; Orphan Working School and Alexandra Orphanage Bill [Lords]. Read the first time ; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills .. 193

PETITIONS.

Agricultural Rates Act, 1896, Etc., Continuance Bill.—Petition of the Scottish Chamber of Agriculture, in favour ; to lie upon the Table 194

Agricultural Rates, Congested Districts, and Burgh Land Tax Relief (Scotland) Act, 1896.—Petitions for continuance ; from the Borde Union Agricultural Society ; Kippen ; and Lesmahagow ; to lie upon the Table 194

Compensation for Damage to Crops Bill.—Petition of the Scottish Chamber of Agriculture, in favour ; to lie upon the Table 194

Dogs Bill.—Petition of the Scottish Chamber of Agriculture ; to lie upon the Table 194

Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill.—Petitions in favour ; from Bridge of Weir ; Dundee ; Edinburgh ; Galashiels ; Locharbriggs ; and Perth ; to lie upon the Table .. ..

Local Authorities (Qualifications of Women) Bill.—Petition from Wandsworth, against ; to lie upon the Table 194

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill.—Petition from Oxenhall, against ; to lie upon the Table 194

Public Libraries Bill.—Petition from Wandsworth, against ; to lie upon the Table 194

Sale of Butter Bill.—Petition from Wandsworth, in favour ; to lie upon the Table 194

Sale of Whisky Bill.—Petition from Wandsworth, in favour ; to lie upon the Table. 194

Vaccination Bill.—Petition from Wandsworth, against ; to lie upon the Table 194

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RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

College Charter Act, 1871 (University College of Sheffield).—Paper [presented 13th April] to be printed. [No. 127.] 195

Elementary School Teachers (Superannuation) Act, 1898.—Paper [presented 13th April] to be printed. [No. 128.] 195

Elementary School Teachers (Superannuation) Act, 1898 (Scotland) 1899.—Paper [presented 13th April] to be printed. [No. 129.] 195

South Africa (Authority of High Commissioner).—Return [presented 13th April] to be printed. [No. 130.] 195

Railways Abandonment.—Copy presented, of Report, under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, by the Board of Trade respecting the Paisley District Tramways Order and the objects thereof [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 131.] 195

South Africa.—Copy presented, of Report of the South African Native Affairs Commission, 1903–5 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 195

Africa (No. 4, 1905).—Copy presented, of Reports from the Director of Agriculture on the Government Farms at Nairobi and Naiwasha, in the East Africa Protectorate, for the year 1904, and on the Prospects of Settlers [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 195

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Political Disabilities of Scottish Peers.—Question, Master of Elibank (Edinburgh, Midlothian); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 196

Reduction of Naval Armaments—International Understanding.—Question, Mr. Markham (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 196

Vacancies for Second Class Clerks.—Question, Mr. Lawrence (Liverpool, Abercromby); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 196

Pupils Fees in Irish Model Schools.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.) Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 197

Disturbances at Mr. Kensit's Meeting at Consett.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 197

Unestablished Rural Auxiliary Postmen in Ireland.—Question, Mr. Duffy (Galway, S.); Answer, Lord Stanley 198

Beira (South Africa) Post Office—Delay in returning Undelivered Postal Packets.—Question, Mr. Black (Banffshire); Answer, Lord Stanley 199

Pay of Post Office Provincial Night Messengers.—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny); Answer, Lord Stanley 199

Learners performing Post Office Duties.—Question, Mr. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green); Answer, Lord Stanley 200

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DATE OF DISCUSSION ON POST OFFICE ESTIMATES.—Question, Mr. Nannetti; Answer, Lord Stanley 201

ARMOURED CRUISERS.—Question, Mr. Yerburgh (Chester); Answer, Mr. Pretyman 201

THE UNEMPLOYED BILL—APPLICATION TO SCOTLAND.—Question, Mr. Findlay (Lanarkshire, N.E.); Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 201

FISH CARRIAGE FROM THE NORTH OF SCOTLAND.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 201

PORT OF NESS HARBOUR—WORK OF MESSRS. D. and T. STEVENSON.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 202

INCOME TAX ON ARREARS OF RENT PAID UNDER THE IRISH LAND ACT.—Question, Sir John Colomb (Great Yarmouth); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 202

BALANCE SHEET OF POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK.—Question, Dr. Macnamara (Camberwell, N.); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 203

POST OFFICE AND TRUSTEE SAVINGS BANKS.—Question, Dr. Macnamara; Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 203

SUPPOSED COMPLAINT AGAINST CONSTABLE PAKENHAM.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Atkinson 204

GOLD OUTPUT OF TRANSVAAL MINES—WHITE AND COLOURED LABOUR EMPLOYED.—Question, Dr. Macnamara; Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 204

NEW FIELD GUNS FOR 4TH WEST YORKS VOLUNTEER ARTILLERY.—Question, Mr. J. F. Hope (Sheffield, Brightside); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster .. 205

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from serving on the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure:—Mr. Waldron; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Joseph Nolan.

Report to lie upon the Table 206

Lunacy Act Amendment (London) Bill.—Order for Second Reading upon Wednesday, 3rd May, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn 207

Land Values (Assessment and Rating) Bill.—[SECOND READING.]—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Trevelyan (Yorkshire, W. R., Elland) 207

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Austin Taylor (Liverpool, East Toxteth) 216
Mr. Remnant (Finsbury, Holborn) 220

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners.

The House went, and, being returned,

Mr. SPEAKER reported the Royal Assent to—

1. Army (Annual) Act, 1905.

2. Local Government Board's Provisional Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Act, 1905.

3. Leeds Corporation (Consolidation) Act, 1905.

Land Values (Assessment and Rating) Bill.—Question again proposed, " That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Remnant 232
Mr. Bond (*Nottingham, E.*) 236

Amendment proposed—

" To leave out all the words after the word ' That,' to the end of the Question in order to add the words, ' a satisfactory reform of the present system of local taxation must be arrived at not by piecemeal and partial treatment, but by such legislation as will secure fair and equitable results to all classes of the community.' "—(*Mr. Remnant.*) —instead thereof."

Question proposed, " That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. Harmood Banner (*Liverpool, Everton*) 240
Mr. Asquith (*Fifeshire, E.*) 244
Sir John Rolleston (*Leicester*) 247
Mr. Joseph Devlin (*Kilkenny, N.*) 254
The Secretary to the Local Government Board (*Mr. Grant Lawson, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk*) 255
Mr. Henry Kimber (*Wandsworth*) 264

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 202 ; Noes, 112. (Division List No. 141).

Main Question put, and agreed to.

The Bill was then read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc."—(*Mr. Trevelyan*).

And, it being after half-past Five of the clock, and objection being taken to further proceeding, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That this House do now adjourn." —(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

Mr. MacVeagh (*Down, S.*) 268

Whereupon Mr. SPEAKER, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 3, adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at twenty minutes before Six o'Clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 17TH APRIL, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.—The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of MR. SPEAKER, owing to indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order 269

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).—MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—Barry Railway Bill [Lords]; Clacton Improvement Bill [Lords]; Commercial Union Assurance Bill [Lords]; Mortgage Insurance Corporation Bill [Lords]; Preston Corporation (Ribble Navigation) Bill [Lords]; Rhymney Railway Bill [Lords]; Truro Water Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 269

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS [LORDS] (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).—MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz. :—Municipal Corporations (Merthyr Tydfil Scheme Confirmation) Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow.. 269

Whitechapel and Bow Railway Bill.—Read the third time, and passed .. 270

Cordoba and Rosario Railway Bill [LORDS].—Entre Rios Railways Bill [Lords]. [Not amended], considered; to be read the third time 270

Clyde Navigation Bill [LORDS].—Hastings Harbour Bill [Lords]; Hessle Gas Bill [Lords]; Marylebone Chapels Bill [Lords]; Metropolitan Railway Bill [Lords.] Read a second time, and committed 270

Mexborough and Swinton Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [LORDS]. To be read a second time To-morrow 270

West Cumberland Electric Tramways (Extension of Time Bill) [LORDS]. Read a second time, and committed 270

Mullinger, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill (BY ORDER).—Second Reading deferred till Thursday, 18th May 270

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Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Birkenhead, Bradford (Yorkshire), Chester, Derby, Leek, Ossett, and Plymouth," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 177] 270

Grangemouth Waterworks and Burgh Extension Order Confirmation Bill.—"To confirm a Provisional Order, under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Grangemouth Waterworks and Burgh Extension," presented by the Lord-Advocate; read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 3rd May, and to be printed. [Bill 178] 270

PETITIONS.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Buckpool; Edinburgh; Larkhall; Leith; and Springburn; to lie upon the Table 271

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.—Petition from Manchester, in favour; to lie upon the Table 271

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRANSVAAL.—Copy presented, of further correspondence relating to Labour in the Transvaal Mines [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 271

BOARD OF TRADE (LABOUR DEPARTMENT).—Copy presented, of Tenth Abstract of Labour Statistics of the United Kingdom, 1902–4 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 271

LIGHTHOUSES, ETC. (LOCAL INSPECTIONS).—Copies presented, of Reports to the Board of Trade by the Trinity House of Deptford Stroud, the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses, and the Commissioners of Irish Lights of their inspection of Local Lighthouses, Buoys, and Beacons [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 132.] 271

BOARD OF EDUCATION.—Copy presented, of Regulations for Secondary Schools (from August 1st, 1905, to 31st July, 1906) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 271

BRITISH MUSEUM.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 7th March; *Mr. John Morley*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 133.] .. 271

IRISH LAND ACT, 1903.—Copy presented, of Treasury Rules and Regulations, dated 14th April, 1905, under the Irish Land Act, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 272

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).—Copy presented, of Report and Papers relating to the Training of Teachers for the year 1903–4 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 272

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Royal Commission on Churches (Scotland).—Copy presented, of Report of the Royal Commission on Churches (Scotland), Vol. I., Report [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 272

Royal Commission on Churches (Scotland).—Copy presented, of Report of the Royal Commission on Churches (Scotland), Vol. II., Minutes of Evidence and Appendices [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 272

Charity Commission (England and Wales).—Copy presented, of fifty-second Report of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 272

Inebriate Reformatories (Regulations).—Copy presented, of Regulations made with the approval of the Secretary of State for the Home Department for the management and discipline of the certified Inebriate Reformatory at Cattal, near York [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 272

East India (Appeals).—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 10th April; *Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree*]; to lie upon the Table 272

Trade Reports (Annual Series).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3339 to 3341 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 273

Egypt (No. 1, 1905).—Copy presented, of Reports by His Majesty's Agents and Consul-General on the Finances, Administration, and Condition of Egypt and the Soudan in 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 273

Parish Trusts (Scotland), (No. 1).—Return ordered, "(1) of all and every sum or sums of money, or other funds or properties, heritable or moveable, which have been given, mortified, or bequeathed wholly or mainly for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Parish, or any of them, as such inhabitants, or for any public purpose connected with the Parish, and which have become vested in or are administered by the Parish Council, in the following form—

Parish of County of

Name, description, and purpose of each gift, mortification, or bequest, and by whom made.	Date of the same.	Amount of the same.	Manner in which the same is invested.	Authority by which such investment was made.	Rate of interest obtained from said investment.	State whether interest is in arrear; and, if so, from what date.	Describe title deeds, and state in whose custody they are deposited.	State in what register the deed of constitution and the last title are recorded.	Annual income derived from the Trust during the year.	Amount distributed to beneficiaries during the year 1904.	Number of beneficiaries among whom the Trust was distributed during the year 1904.	Has the Trust been transferred to the Parish Council under Section 30 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894; and, if so, by whom.

And (2) of the Parochial and other Trusts upon which the Parish Council have applied for representation in terms of Section 30 of The Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894 :—

Names of Trusts upon which the Parish Council have made application for representation in terms of Section 30 of The Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894.	Person or body to whom application was made.	Has application been granted?	Where application has been refused, state grounds on which such refusal was based.

(*Mr. Haldane.*) 237

PARISH TRUSTS (SCOTLAND), (No. 2).—Return ordered, "(1) of all and every sum or sums of money, or other funds or properties, heritable or moveable, which have been given, mortified, or bequeathed wholly or mainly for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Parish, or any of them, as such inhabitants, or for any public purpose connected with the Parish, other than the purposes excepted from the operation of Sub-section (1) of Section 30 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894, and which have become vested in or are administered by the kirk session or heritors and kirk session or minister of the Parish, or the kirk session or deacons' court or managers or vestry of a congregation belonging to any religious denomination, in the following form—

Parish of County of

Name, description, and purpose of each gift, mortification, or bequest, and by whom made.	Date of the same.	Amount of the same.	Manner in which the same is invested.	Authority by which such investment was made.	Rate of interest obtained from said investment.	State whether interest is in arrear; and, if so, from what date.	Describe title deeds and state in whose custody they are deposited.	State in what register the deed of constitution and the last title are recorded.	Number of Trustees.	Number of additional persons (if any) appointed to act along with the Trustees in terms of Section 30 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894, and date of approval of Local Government Board.	Annual income derived from the Trust during the year 1904.	Amount distributed to beneficiaries during the year 1904.	Number of beneficiaries among whom the Trust was distributed during the year 1904.
											£ s. d.	£ s. d.	

And (2) of Trusts which have been transferred by the kirk session or other trustees as aforesaid in terms of Section 30 (1) of The Local Government (Scotland Act, 1894—

Name of Trust.	Date of Transfer.	Has Trust been transferred to Parish Council or to persons appointed by them. In the latter case, give names of such persons.

(*Mr. Haldane.*) 275

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Burgh Trusts (Scotland).—Return ordered (1) of all and every sum or sums of money, or other funds or properties, heritable or moveable, which have been given, mortified, or bequeathed wholly or mainly for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Burgh, or any of them, as such inhabitants, or for any public purpose connected with the Burgh, and which have become vested in or are administered by the town council, or any member or members thereof, in the following form—

Town Council of County of

Name, description, and purpose of each gift, mortification, or bequest, and by whom made.	Date of the same.	Amount of the same.	Manner in which the same is invested.	Authority by which such investment was made.	Rate of interest obtained from said investment.	State whether interest is in arrear; and, if so, from what date.	Describe title deeds, and state in whose custody they are deposited.	State in what register the deed of constitution and the last title are recorded.	Annual income derived from the Trust during the year 1904.	Amount distributed to beneficiaries during the year 1904.	Number of beneficiaries among whom the Trust was distributed during the year 1904.
									£ s. d.	£ s. d.	

And (2) of Trusts which have been transferred by the Town Council, or members thereof, in terms of Section 30 (1) of The Local Government Scotland) Act, 1894—

Name of Trust.	Date of Transfer.	Has Trust been transferred to Parish Council or to persons appointed by them. In the latter case, give names of such persons.

—(*Mr. Haldane.*) 277

By-Laws in Rural Districts.—Return ordered, "showing, as regards each rural district in England and Wales, the area, population, and number of parishes, whether there are in force any By-laws with respect to new streets and buildings, and, if so, the scope of such By-laws, in the following form—

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Rural District.	Area of District in acres.	Population according to Census of 1901.	Number of parishes in District.	Whether any By-laws with respect to new streets or new buildings are in force.	Where any such By-laws are in force in part only of the District, the names of the parishes in which they are in force.	Whether the By-laws substantially follow the Urban Model Series.	If so, whether they contain any modification as regards the materials to be used in the structure of walls.	Whether the By-laws substantially follow the Rural Model Series.	If in excess of Rural Model, whether they contain any additional provisions as regards the materials to be used in the structure of walls.

—(*Mr. Henry Hobhouse*) 277

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GAS UNDERTAKINGS (LOCAL AUTHORITIES).—Return ordered, "relating to all authorised Gas Undertakings in the United Kingdom belonging to Local Authorities, for the year ended the 25th day of March, 1905 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 332, of Session 1904)."—(*Mr. Bonar Law*) .. 279

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE (ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, AND IRELAND).—Return ordered, "showing for the year ended the 31st day of March, 1905 (1) the amount contributed by England, Scotland, and Ireland, respectively, to the Revenue collected by Imperial officers; (2) the expenditure on English, Scotch, and Irish services met out of such Revenue; and (3) the balances of Revenue contributed by England, Scotland, and Ireland, respectively, which are available for Imperial expenditure (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 225, of Session 1904)."—(*Mr. Lough.*) 279

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT BY UNITED STATES OF SUGAR GROWN IN THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS.—Question, Mr. Lough (Islington, W.); Answer, Mr. Bonar Law 279

BRITISH PILOTAGE CERTIFICATES—ELIGIBILITY OF FOREIGNERS TO HOLD SAME.—Question, Mr. Yerburgh (Chester); Answer, Mr. Bonar Law 280

GOVERNMENT'S FISCAL POLICY.—Question, Mr. Black (Banffshire); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 280

LANDING OF FISH ILLEGALLY TRAWLED IN MORAY FIRTH.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 281

IRISH POOR LAW AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.—Question, Mr. Haviland Burke (King's County, Tullamore); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 281

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BRISTOL ART UNION—PICTURE LOTTERY.—Question, Mr. Charles Hobhouse (Bristol, E.); Answer, Mr. Bonar Law 285

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SCOTTISH CHURCH DISPUTE.—Question, Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 286

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Lunacy Bill.—"To amend the Lunacy Acts," presented by Mr. Attorney-General; supported by Mr. Solicitor-General; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, May 2nd, and to be printed. [Bill 179] 327

County Courts (No. 2) Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to County Courts," presented by Mr. Attorney-General; supported by Mr. Solicitor-General; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, May 2nd, and to be printed. [Bill 180] 328

Agricultural Rates Act, 1896, etc., Continuance Bill.—[SECOND READING]. —Order for Second Reading read.

The President of the Local Government Board (*Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central*) 328

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (*Stirling Burghs*) 331
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (*Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.*) 334
Mr. Whitley (*Halifax*) 337
Mr. Trevelyan (*Yorkshire, W.R., Elland*) 344

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words, 'No Bill dealing with the severe burden of the local rates on the agricultural industry will be satisfactory or afford permanent relief which does not provide for a contribution payable by the owners of land based on its selling value, and utilise the fund so provided to relieve the ratepayers of a substantial portion of the burdens which result from the local payment of national services and from the incidence of existing rates on buildings and improvements, instead of adopting the crude and unfair method of paying half the rates on agricultural land out of the Imperial Exchequer" (*Mr. Whitley*)—instead thereof."

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. Chaplin (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) 351
Mr. George Whiteley (Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey) 354
Sir Edward Strachey (Somersetshire, S.) 358
Mr. Spear (Devonshire, Tavistock) 362
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Mr. Luke White (Yorkshire, E.R., Buckrose) 370
Sir Carne Rasch (Essex, Chelmsford) 372
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Mr. Ernest Gray (West Ham, N.) 377
Mr. Perks (Lincolnshire, Louth) 380
Mr. Emmott (Oldham) 382
Sir John Kennaway (Devonshire, Honiton) 385
Mr. Soares (Devonshire, Barnstaple) 387

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

Swansea Corporation Bill (BY ORDER).—Order for Consideration, as amended, read.

Sir George Newnes (Swansea Town) 388
Mr. Brynmor Jones (Swansea District) 389

Amendment proposed to the Bill—

"In page 13, line 18, to leave out the word 'thirty' and insert the word 'sixty'—(*Sir George Newnes*)—instead thereof."

Question proposed, "That the word 'thirty' stand part of the Bill."

Mr. Stevenson (Suffolk, Eye) 391
Mr. Allhusen (Hackney, Central) 393
Mr. Higham (Yorkshire, W.R., Sowerby) 394
Mr. Rose (Cambridgeshire, Newmarket) 396
Sir Walter Foster (Derbyshire, Ilkeston) 397

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 153; Noes, 111. (Division List No. 142.)

Bill to be read the third time.

Agricultural Rates Act, 1896, etc., Continuance Bill.—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment to Question [17th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'no Bill dealing with the severe burden of the local rates on the agricultural industry will be satisfactory or afford

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permanent relief which does not provide for a contribution payable by the owners of land based on its selling value, and utilise the fund so provided to relieve the ratepayers of a substantial portion of the burdens which result from the local payment of national services, and from the incidence of existing rates on buildings and improvements, instead of adopting the crude and unfair method of paying half the rates on agricultural land out of the Imperial Exchequer.'—(*Mr. Whitley*)—instead thereof."

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. Soares 401
Sir Mark Stewart (Kirkcudbrightshire) 406
Sir Brampton Gurdon (Norfolk, N.) 407
Mr. A. K. Loyd (Berkshire, Abingdon) 409
Mr. Lambert (Devonshire, South Molton) 410
Mr. Peel (Manchester, S.) 413
Mr. Markham (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) 415
Colonel Kenyon-Slaney (Shropshire, Newport) 416
Sir Walter Foster (Derbyshire, Ilkeston) 418

Question put, and agreed.

Main Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 174 ; Noes, 59. (Division List No. 143.)

Bill read a second time, and committed for Wednesday, 3rd May.

Public Road (Ireland) Bill.—Read a second time, and committed for this day. 419

Adjourned at twelve minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 18TH APRIL, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.—The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. SPEAKER, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order 421

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—East Cowes Gas Bill [Lords]; Leeds and Liverpool Canal Bill [Lords]; Orphan Working School and Alexandra Orphanage Bill [Lords]; Southend and Colchester Light Railways Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 421

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PROVISION ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time upon Tuesday, May 2nd .. 421

Great Western Railway (New Railways) Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 422

Aberdare Urban District Council Bill (CHANGED FROM " ABERDARE TRAMWAYS BILL ").—As amended, considered ; to be read the third time .. 422

Aylesbury Gas Bill.—As amended, considered ; to be read the third time 422

Colne Corporation Bill.—As amended, considered ; Amendments made ; Bill to be read the third time 422

Ealing Corporation Bill.—South Oxfordshire Water and Gas Bill.—As amended, considered ; to be read the third time 422

Nine Mile Point Railway Bill [LORDS].—Worcestershire County Council (Bridges) Bill. Read a second time, and committed 422

Mexborough and Swinton Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [LORDS] (BY ORDER).—Read a second time, and committed 422

Great Northern (Ireland) and Midland Railways Bill (BY ORDER).—Adjourned Debate on Question [April 12th] further adjourned till this Evening's Sitting 422

Municipal Corporations (Merthyr Tydvil Scheme Confirmation) Bill [LORDS].—Read a second time, and committed 422

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill.—" To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Barnet, Brockenhurst, Farnham, Gosport and Alverstoke, Houghton-le-Spring and District (Amendment), Lichfield, Ludlow, Lytham, St. Albans (Rural), and Ware," presented by Mr. Bonar Law ; supported by Mr. Victor Cavendish ; read the first time ; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 181] 422

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill—" To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade, under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Bishop's Stortford, Dover (Extension), Hemsworth and District, Marlborough, Tottington, and Woking (Chertsey Extension)," presented by Mr. Bonar Law ; supported by Mr. Victor Cavendish ; read the first time ; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 182] 422

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Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill—" To confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board for Ireland, under The Local Government (Ireland) (No. 2) Act, 1900," presented by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland; supported by Mr. Walter Long; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 183] 423

DIVORCE BILLS.—Mr. Attorney-General, Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland, Mr. Serjeant Hemphill, Sir John Kennaway, Sir Joseph Leese, The Lord-Advocate, Sir Robert Reid, Mr. Solicitor-General, and Mr. Thomas Shaw, were nominated members of the Select Committee on Divorce Bills.

Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords to request that their Lordships will be pleased to communicate to the House copies of the Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings, together with documents deposited in the case of McConnell's Divorce Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Select Committee on Divorce Bills that they do hear Counsel and examine Witnesses for McConnell's Divorce Bill [Lords], and also that they do hear Counsel and examine Witnesses against the Bill, if the parties concerned think fit to be heard by Counsel and produce Witnesses.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*) 423

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LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Burghead; Carnoustie; Glasgow (five); Larkhall; Leith; Montrose; Perth; Rothesay; and Sanquhar; to lie upon the Table 424

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Sneem Traders and Carriage of Goods.—Questions, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.) .. 456

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NEW BILLS.

Lunacy Acts Amendment (London) (No. 2) Bill.—"To authorise the London County Council to provide receiving houses for the reception of persons mentally afflicted or alleged to be of unsound mind, and to authorise the detention of such persons in such houses, and for other purposes connected therewith," presented by Sir John Tuke; supported by Mr. John Burns and Mr. Benn; to be read a second time upon Monday, May 8th, and to be printed. [Bill 184.] 458

Small Holdings (No. 3) Bill.—"To further facilitate the provision of Small Holdings," presented by Mr. Channing; supported by Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Herbert Samuel, Mr. Price, Mr. Bright, Mr. Lyell, Dr. Hutchinson, Mr. George White, and Mr. Slack; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, May 2nd, and to be printed. [Bill 185.] 458

Unemployed Workmen.

The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 459

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to establish organisation with a view to the provision of employment or assistance for Unemployed Workmen in proper cases."—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*)

Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) 461

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Gerald Balfour, Mr Walter Long, and Mr. Grant Lawson.

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Unemployed Workmen Bill.—" To establish organisation with a view to the provision of employment or assistance for Unemployed Workmen in proper cases," presented accordingly, and read the first time ; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, May 3rd, and to be printed. [Bill 186.]

ALIENS.

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's) 464

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Law with regard to Aliens."—(*Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*).—

Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) 468

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas, Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. Attorney-General, Mr. Cochrane, and Mr. Bonar Law.

Aliens Bill.—" To amend the Law with regard to Aliens," presented accordingly, and read the first time ; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, May 2nd, and to be printed. [Bill 187.]

SUPPLY (CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES).—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [April 13th], " That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair (for Committee on Civil Services and Revenue Departments Estimates)."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

Question again proposed.

Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.) 473
Mr. Bell (Derby) 476
The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Bonar Law, Glasgow, Blackfriars) 488
Mr. Schwann (Manchester, N.) 494
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Sir Charles Renshaw (Renfrew, W.) 496
Mr. Markham (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) 497
Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil) 498
Mr. Benn (Devonport) 500
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The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education (Sir William Anson, Oxford University) 505
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Mr. Goddard (Ipswich) 514
Mr. Samuel Evans (Glamorganshire, Mid) 515
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Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) 519
Mr. Whitley (Halifax) 521
Mr. Yoxall (Nottingham, W.) 523
Mr. Robson (South Shields) 525

Mr. Crooks (Woolwich) 526
Sir William Anson 528
Mr. Bryn Roberts (Carnarvonshire, Eifion) 528

Question put, and agreed to.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1905–6. CLASS I.—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £31,700, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for the House of Parliament Buildings."

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

EVENING SITTING.

North British Railway (General Powers) Bill. [SECOND READING].—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs) 530
Master of Elibank (Edinburgh, Midlothian) 530

Bill read a second time, and committed.

Great Northern (Ireland) and Midland Railways Bill [BY ORDER].—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [12th April], "That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Great Northern (Ireland) and Midland Railways Bill to omit Clause 33 of the Bill."

Question again proposed.

Mr. Wolff (Belfast), E.) 530

Amendment proposed—

"After the word 'omit,' to insert the words 'Sub-sections (2) and (3) of.'"—(*Mr. Wolff.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. Lonsdale (Armagh, Mid.) 531

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Ordered, that it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Great Northern (Ireland) and Midland Railways Bill to omit Sub-sections (2) and (3) of Clause 33 of the Bill.

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PHYSICAL DETERIORATION.

Mr. Slack (Hertfordshire, St. Albans) 531
Mr. Claude Hay (Shoreditch, Hoxton) 540

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, local education authorities should be empowered) as unanimously recommended by the Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration, 1904) to make provision, under such regulations and conditions as they may decide, for ensuring that all the children at any public elementary school in their area shall receive proper nourishment before being subjected to mental or physical instruction, and for recovering the cost, where expedient, from the parents or guardians."—(*Mr. Slack.*)

Sir George Bartley (Islington, N.) 542
Sir Frederick Banbury (Camberwell, Peckham) 546

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the words 'where expedient from the parent or guardians,' in order to add the words 'from the parents, and that when the parents are unable to defray the cost the relief be supplied by the Poor Law.'"—(*Sir George Bartley,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Dr. Macnamara (Camberwell, N.) 547
Sir W. Hart Dyke (Kent, Dartford) 552
Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil) 554
Sir John Gorst (Cambridge University) 557
The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education (Sir William Anson, Oxford University) 558
Sir Walter Foster (Derbyshire, Ilkeston) 567

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 100 ; Noes, 64. (Division List No. 144.)

Main Question again proposed.

And, it being after Midnight, and objection being taken to further Proceeding, Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER proceeded to interrupt the Business.

Whereupon Mr. SLACK rose in his place and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided :—Ayes, 93 ; Noes, 36. (Division List, No. 145.)

Whereupon Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER declared that the Question was not decided in the affirmative, because it was not supported by the majority prescribed by Standing Order 27, and that the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Wednesday, May 3rd.

WORKMEN'S TRAINS.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the working and administration of the Cheap Trains Act, 1883, and to report whether any , and ,if so, what. amendments are reasonable and necessary to improve the service of Workmen's Trains in the Metropolis and elsewhere to secure the provision of the accommodation required by Workmen by all Railway Companies.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of, Mr. Bell, Colonel Bowles, Sir George Fardell, Mr. Fison, Mr. Galloway, Mr. Leverton Harris, Mr. Lough, Colonel Lockwood, Mr. Nannetti, Captain Norton, Mr. James O'Connor, Mr. Peel, Sir Harry Samuel, Mr. Ure, and Sir Thomas Wrightson.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*) 571

Adjourned at twenty-seven minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 19TH APRIL, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.—The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of MR. SPEAKER, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order 573

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Great Western Railway (Additional Powers) Bill.—Halifax Corporation Bill; Stockport Corporation Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time 573

PRIVATE BILLS, ETC.—Ordered, That Standing Orders 39, 128, and 230 be suspended, and that the time for depositing Petitions and Memorials against Private Bills, or against any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate, and for depositing duplicates of any Documents relating to any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate, also for depositing at the Private Bill Office all Documents relating to any Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the Recess.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means*) 573

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill.—" To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Brentford, Ealing, Hanwell, Heston and Isleworth, Sale, Sheffield, and Sunderland," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 188] 573

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PETITIONS.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Auchterarder; Bonnyrigg; Dalkeith; Darvel; Glasgow; Govan; Greenock; Perth; and Stevenston; to lie upon the Table 574

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.—Petition from Lee and other places, in favour; to lie upon the Table 574

RATES AND TAXES.—Petition from Norwood and Dulwich, for reduction; to lie upon the Table 574

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EAST INDIA (APPEALS).—Return [presented 17th April] to be printed. [No. 134] 574

TRADE (FOREIGN COUNTRIES AND BRITISH POSSESSIONS).—Copy presented, of Annual Statement of the Trade of the United Kingdom with Foreign Countries and British Possessions for 1904. Volume I. [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 574

TRANSVAAL.—Copy presented, of Papers relating to Constitutional Changes in the Transvaal [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 574

TRANSVAAL.—Copy presented, of Despatch transmitting Letters Patent and Order in Council providing for Constitutional Changes in the Transvaal [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 574

PUBLIC INCOME AND EXPENDITURE.— Account presented, of the Gross Public Income and Expenditure in the year ended 31st March, 1905, together with the Balances in the Exchequer at the commencement and at the termination of the year, and the amounts received into or issued from the Exchequer in respect of Funded and Unfunded Debt created or redeemed in the said year [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 135] 574

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 12th April, 1905, granting to Matthew Henry Danily, Postmaster at Malpas, a Retired Allowance under the Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table .. 575

SOMALILAND PROTECTORATE.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated April 13th, 1905, as to audit of the Accounts of the Somaliland Protectorate [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 575

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW.—Copy presented, of Abstract of Accounts of the University of Glasgow for the year ending 30th September, 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 136] 575

TREATY SERIES (NO. 9, 1905).—Copy presented, of Convention between the United Kingdom and France respecting Commercial Relations between France and India. Signed at London, 19th February, 1903. Ratifications exchanged at London, 27th March, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 575

TREATY SERIES (No. 10, 1905).—Copy presented, of Convention between the United Kingdom and France respecting Commercial Relations between France and the British Protectorates of East Africa, Central Africa, and Uganda. Signed at London, 23rd February, 1903. Ratifications exchanged at London, 27th March, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 575

TREATY SERIES (No. 11, 1905).—Copy presented, of Convention between the United Kingdom and France respecting Commercial Relations between France and the Seychelles Islands. Signed at London, 16th April, 1902. Ratifications exchanged at London, 27th March, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 575

TREATY SERIES (No. 12, 1905).—Copy presented, of Convention between the United Kingdom and France respecting Commercial Relations between France and Ceylon. Signed at London, 19th February, 1903. Ratifications exchanged at London, 27th March, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 576

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3342 to 3345 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 576

EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION.—Copy ordered, "of Statistical Tables relating to Emigration and Immigration from and into the United Kingdom in the year 1904, and Report to the Board of Trade thereon."—(*Mr. Bonar Law*).

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 137] 576

UNITED FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND AND THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND (LITIGATION) (ROYAL COMMISSION TO SIR JOHN CHEYNE).—Return ordered, "showing the number, nature, and result of the litigations instituted in the Courts of Scotland since the 1st day of August, 1904, by persons representing or purporting to represent, the Free Church of Scotland against the United Free Church of Scotland, or persons purporting to represent it, under the following heads—

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.
Court in which brought, and date of commencement.	Nature of action or proceeding.	Pursuers or complainers.	Defenders or Respondents.	Nature of conclusion or prayer, *e.g.*, whether for interdict or declarator, or as the case may be.	Nature of property sought to be affected—Church manse, hall, or glebe, and parish and county where situated.	Nature of decisions given, and dates thereof, for example, interdict granted or declarator, or as the case may be.	Whether judgment now final or appealed, and present position of litigation.	Whether property before Sir John Cheyne, and what was his decision, and the date thereof.

—(*Mr. Black.*)

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Public Elementary Schools (Scholarships, etc.).—Return ordered, "showing the provision made by local education authorities for enabling Scholars of Public Elementary Schools to proceed to Secondary Schools or to pupil teacher centres and preparatory classes connected therewith by means of Exhibitions, Scholarships, Bursaries, payment of tuition fees, payment of travelling expenses, maintenance grants, etc., in the following form :—

Table A : Scholarships and Bursaries tenable by Scholars other than those who are pledged to become or who are Pupil Teachers.

	Number.		Age limits.	Conditions of Award.	Where tenable.	Number of years tenable.	Value during each year of tenure.
	Boys.	Girls.					
1. Scholarships -							
2. Bursaries - -							

"And, similar Return in respect of Table B : Scholarships and Bursaries tenable only by Scholars who are pledged to become Pupil Teachers."—(*Dr. Macnamara*).

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Revision of Glasgow Postal Staff.—Question, Mr. Nolan ; Answer, Lord Stanley 579

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Issue of British Pilotage Certificates to Foreigners.—Question, Mr. Charles Hobhouse (Bristol, E.); Answer, Mr. Bonar Law 582

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London Rates.—Question, Mr. Benn (Devonport); Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 595

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NEW BILL.

Ferries (Acquisition by Local Authorities) Bill.—" To enable Local Authorities to acquire existing Ferries by agreement," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson ; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour and Mr. Solicitor-General ; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 2nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 189.] 609

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Mr. Walter Long .. 665
Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.) .. 666
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Mr. John O'Donnell (Mayo, S.) .. 668

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, "That this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, May 2nd."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

Adjourned accordingly at twenty-seven minutes after Seven o'clock till Tuesday, May 2nd.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 2ND MAY, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.—The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of MR. SPEAKER, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order .. 669

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Ealing Corporation Bill.—Read the third time, and passed .. 669

Entre Rios Railways Bill [LORDS].—Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment .. 669

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Andover Lighting and Power Bill.—As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time .. 669

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House Letting (Scotland) Bill.—Petition of Scottish Trade Protection Society, against; to lie upon the Table 670

Lands Valuation (Scotland) Bill.—Petition of Scottish Trade Protection Society, against; to lie upon the Table 670

Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill.—Petitions in favour; from Airdrie; Anderston; Annan; Arbroath (two); Bothwell (two); Brechin; Butterburn; Cambuslang; Castletown; Cleland; Cowcaddens; Cromarty; Culbokie; Dingwall; Dundee (nine); Dunfermline; Edinburgh; Fortrose; Glasgow (four); Greenock (three); Innerleithen; Inverness; Kilwinning; Kirkwall; Lochans; Lochee; Maxwelltown; Montrose (two); Morrison; Motherwell (two); Nairn (two); Newarthill; Newton; Peebles; Scottish Permissive Bill and Temperance Association; Tain; Thornton; Troqueer; Uddingston; and Wick; to lie upon the Table 670

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill.—Petition from St. Mabe, against; to lie upon the Table. 670

Trades Unions and Trade Disputes Bill.—Petition of Scottish Trade Protection Society, against; to lie upon the Table 670

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS (RECESS).

The following Papers, presented by Command of His Majesty during the Easter Recess, were delivered to the Librarian of the House of Commons during the Recess, pursuant to the Standing Order of the 14th August, 1896:—

1. Trade Reports (Annual Series). Copies of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3346 to 3353. .. 671

2. Treaty Series (No. 13, 1905). Copy of Convention between the United Kingdom and Japan respecting Commercial Relations between Japan and India. Signed at Tokio, 29th August, 1904. Ratifications exchanged at Tokio, 15th March, 1905 671

3. Explosions (Eley's Factory at Edmonton, Middlesex). Copy of Report by Captain J. H. Thomson, His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Explosives, to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on the circumstances attending an explosion of collodion cotton which occurred at the Factory of Messrs. Eley Brothers, Limited, at Edmonton, Middlesex, on the 7th March, 1905 671

4. Factory and Workshop (Laundries). Copy of List of Religious and Charitable Institutions in which Laundries are carried on 671

5. Board of Education (Special Reports). Copy of Special Reports on Educational Subjects, Vol. 15. School Training for the Home Duties of Women. Part I. The Teaching of Domestic Science in the United States of America 671

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6. Underfed Children at Public Elementary Schools. Copy of Circulars issued in April, 1905, by the Local Government Board and the Board of Education as to the cases of children attending public elementary schools who are without adequate nourishment 671

7. Lunacy (Scotland). Copy of Forty-seventh Annual Report of the General Board of Commissioners in Lunacy for Scotland 671

8. Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887 (Eviction Notices). Copy of Return of Eviction Notices filed during the quarter ended 31st March, 1905 .. 671

9. Agrarian Offences (Provinces) (Ireland). Copy of Return by Provinces of Agrarian Offences in Irealnd for the year ended 31st December, 1904 672

10. Education (Ireland). Copy of Annual Report of the Commissioners of Education in Ireland for the year 1904.

Ordered, That the said Papers do lie upon the Table 672

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland).—Copy presented, of Fourth Annual General Report of the Department, 1903–4 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 672

Contempt of Court (Ireland) (Persons Committed).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 14th March; *Mr. McHugh*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 138.] 672

National Education (Ireland) Commissioners (Meetings, etc.).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 12th April; *Mr. Timothy M. Healy*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 139.] 672

Pharmacy (Ireland) Acts, 1875 to 1890.—Copy presented, of Order in Council dated 22nd April, 1905, approving of Regulations made by the Pharmaceutical Society [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 672

Trade Reports (Annual Series).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3354 to 3558 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 672

Trade Reports (Miscellaneous Series)—Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Miscellaneous Series, No. 633 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 672

Free and United Free Churches (Scotland).—Copy presented, of Interim Report of the Departmental Commission on the Free United and Free Churches, Scotland, to the Secretary for Scotland by Sir John Cheyne, K.C. [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 673

Mines and Quarries.—Copy presented, of Reports of His Majesty's Inspectors of Mines for the year 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 673

Wellington College.—Copy presented, of Report of the Governors of Wellington College for the year ending 31st December, 1904, with Accounts [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 673

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REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS (GREAT BRITAIN).—Copy presented, of Forty-eighth Report of His Majesty's Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools for 1904. Part I. List of Schools and Detailed Reports [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 673

MINES (FATAL ACCIDENTS).—Return presented, relative thereto (Address 28th March; *Mr. Fenwick*); to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 140.] 673

METROPOLITAN POLICE.—Accounts presented, of the Metropolitan Police and the Police Pension Funds for the year ended 31st March, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 141.] 673

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).—Copy presented, of a Licence to be at large granted to Harry Tate, to which are annexed Conditions other than those contained in Schedule A of The Penal Servitude Act, 1864 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 673

POST OFFICE (FOREIGN AND COLONIAL POST).—Copy presented, of the Foreign and Colonial Post Amendment (No. 9) Warrant, 1904, dated 31st December, 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 673

POST OFFICE (INLAND POST).—Copy presented, of the Inland Post Amendment (No. 1) Warrant, 1904, dated 7th December, 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 674

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS).—Copy presented, of the Postal Order (Inland) Amendment (No. 2) Regulations, 1905, dated 17th April, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 674

POST OFFICE (FOREIGN AND COLONIAL POST).—Copy presented, of the Foreign and Colonial Post Amendment [No. 10) Warrant, 1905, dated 31st March, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 674

TRANSVAAL AND ORANGE RIVER COLONY.—Copy presented, of Further Correspondence relating to Affairs in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 674

COLONIES (REPRESENTATIVE INSTITUTIONS).—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 7th March; *Dr. Macnamara*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 142.] 674

GAS COMPANIES (METROPOLIS).—Copy presented, of Accounts of the Metropolitan Gas Companies for the year 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 143.] 674

BOARD OF EDUCATION.—Copy presented, of Draft Amending Order No. 1 of the Board of Education, amending Final Order No. 391, under Section 11 (8) of The Education Act, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 144.] 674

COMPANIES (WINDING-UP) ACT, 1890.—Account presented, showing Receipts and Expenditure on account of Proceedings during the year ended 31st March, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 145.] 674

BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883 (PROCEEDINGS).—Account presented, showing the Receipts and Expenditure on account of Bankruptcy Proceedings during the year ended 31st March, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 146.] 675

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Superannuation Act, 1887.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 10th April, 1905, granting a retired allowance to John Bolton, late of the Engineer in Chief's Department, General Post Office, under the Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 675

Papers laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House.—1. Thames Conservancy. General Report and Accounts of the Conservators for 1904 [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 147.]

2. Public Records (Fines and Recoveries). Copy of Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes of Documents connected with the Alienation of Land by means of Fines and Recoveries, which are now in the Public Record Office, but are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation therein [by Act] 675

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Election of Dublin University Board—Roman Catholic Representatives.—Question, Dr. Thompson (Monaghan, N.); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour .. 675

Scotch Congested Districts Board—Power to Raise Money on the Security of Land already Purchased.—Question, Mr. Ainsworth (Argyllshire); Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 675

Excesses in Average Salaries of Elementary School Teachers—Contributions to Deferred Annuity Fund.—Question, Sir M. Hicks-Beach (Bristol, W.); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 676

Salaries and Fees of Law Officers of the Crown.—Question, Mr. Whitley (Halifax); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 677

Assistant Clerks in the Civil Service.—Question, Mr. Reddy (King's County, Birr); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 678

Assistant Clerks in the General Register and Record Office of Shipping.—Question, Mr. Reddy; Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 678

Classification of Battleships.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, Mr. Pretyman 679

Inspection of Lightships, etc., by Night—The Tender "Signal."—Question, Major Jameson (Clare, W.); Answer, Mr. Bonar Law 679

Income-tax deducted from Pensions of Officers of His Majesty's Forces.—Question, Mr. Marks (Kent, Thanet); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain .. 680

Meetings of Commissioners of National Education in Ireland.—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 681

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Armour Plate for the Navy.—Question, Mr. J. F. Hope (Sheffield, Brightside); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge) 682

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VOLUNTEER CAPITATION BY GRANTS.—Question, Major Evans Gordon (Tower Hamlets, Stepney); Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, N.W.) 682

MILITARY HEADGEAR.—Question, Colonel Legge (St. George's, Hanover Square); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 682

INEBRIATE HOMES.—Question, Mr. Purvis (Peterborough); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's) 683

IMMIGRATION OF ALIENS.—Questions, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean), Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis), and Mr. William Rutherford (Liverpool); Answers, Mr. Akers Douglas 683

THE QUADRANT, REGENT STREET.—Question, Major Evans Gordon; Answer, The Financial Secretary of the Treasury (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.) 683

ROYAL COMMISSION ON SEWAGE DISPOSAL.—Question, Mr. J. F. Hope; Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 685

REPORT OF ROYAL COMMISSION ON SEWAGE DISPOSAL.—Question, Mr. J. F. Hope; Answer, The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Grant Lawson, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) 685

IRISH SCHOOL FEES.—Question, Mr. T. L. Corbett (Down, N.); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.) 685

SCOTTISH EDUCATION BILL.—Question, Mr. H. Lawson (Tower Hamlets, Mile End); Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 685

THE SCOTTISH ECCLESIASTICAL DIFFICULTY.—Question, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 685

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Questions, Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny), and Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil); Answers, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 686

THE TELEPHONE AGREEMENT.—Question, Mr. Keir Hardie; Answer, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury (Sir A. Acland-Hood, Somersetshire, Wellington) 687

NEW BILL.

Post Office (Money Orders) Bill.—"To extend certain provisions of the Post Office (Money Orders) Acts to the Money Orders transmitted to and from Foreign States and British Protectorates, presented by Lord Stanley; supported by Mr. Victor Cavendish; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 190.] 687

Aliens Bill—[SECOND READING].—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Sir Charles Dilke (*Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean*) 688
Mr. Trevelyan (*Yorkshire, W.R., Elland*) 700

Amendment proposed—

> "To leave out all the words after the word 'That,' and add the words 'This House, holding that the evils of low-priced alien labour can best be met by legislation to prevent sweating, desires to assure itself before assenting to the Aliens Bill that sufficient regard is had in the proposed measure to the retention of the principle of asylum for the victims of persecution.'"—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Major Evans Gordon (*Tower Hamlets, Stepney*) 706
Mr. Herbert Samuel (*Yorkshire, Cleveland*) 724
Mr. H. Lawson (*Tower Hamlets, Mile End*) 733
Mr. Asquith (*Fifeshire, E.*) 740
The Secretary of State for the Home Department (*Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's*) 744
Mr. Samuel Smith (*Flintshire*) 753
Major Seely (*Isle of Wight*) 757
Mr. Sydney Buxton (*Tower Hamlets, Poplar*) 759
Mr. J. Chamberlain (*Birmingham, W.*) 763
Mr. Emmott (*Oldham*) 767

And it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

ALIENS BILL. [SECOND READING.]—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment to Question [2nd May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was—

> "To leave out all the words after the word 'that' and add the words 'this House holding that the evils of low-priced alien labour can best be met by legislation to prevent sweating, desires to assure itself before assenting to the Aliens Bill that sufficient regard is had in the proposed measure to the retention of the principle of asylum for the victims of persecution.'"—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. Emmott (*Oldham*) 769
Sir Howard Vincent (*Sheffield, Central*) 774
Mr. Keir Hardie (*Merthyr Tydvil*) 778

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Mr. Forde Ridley (Bethnal Green, S.W.) 782
Mr. Atherley-Jones (Durham, N.W.) 789
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 794

Question put.

TheHouse divided :—Ayes, 211 ; Noes, 59. (Division List No. 146.)

Main Question put, and agreed to. Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

Adjourned at one minute after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 3RD MAY, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order 809

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Great Western Railway (Additional Powers) Bill (King's Consent Signified).—Bill read the third time, and passed 809

Heckmondwike Improvement Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 809

Orphan Working School and Alexandra Orphanage Bill [LORDS].—Read a second time, and committed 809

Grangemouth Waterworks and Burgh Extension Order Confirmation Bill.—Read a second time; to be considered upon Friday 809

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Banbury (Rural), Lunesdale (Rural), and Newport Pagnell (Rural), and the Easington and Sedgefield, the Lanchester, and the Stone Joint Hospital Districts," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time: and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 191.] 809

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Carmarthen, Hexham, Liverpool, Lymm, Nantwich, and Widnes," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 192] 809

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Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to Belfast, the Belfast, Holywood, and Castlereagh United District, Cork (Rural), Downpatrick (Rural), Newtownards, and North Dublin (Rural)," presented by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland; supported by Mr. Walter Long; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 193] 810

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the Baltracey River, the River Lerr, and the Blackwater Drainage Districts, in the counties of Carlow, Kildare, and Meath," presented by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland; supported by Mr. Walter Long; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills; and to be printed. [Bill 194] 810

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions for alteration; from Anstruther Easter; and Leith; to lie upon the Table 810

ILLEGITIMATE BIRTHS IN WORKHOUSES.—Petition from St. Neots. for legislation; to lie upon the Table 810

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Ardrossan (two); Avoch; Bainsford; Barrhead (two); Berwick-upon Tweed (two); Birsay; Boddham (two); Borrowstouness; Broughty Ferry; Buckie; Carnoustie; Castle Douglas; Castletown; Coalburn; Coupar Angus; Curron; Dalgety; Denny; Dumbarton; Dunfermline; Dunipace and Denny; Dunkeld; Dunscore; Eaglesfield; Edinburgh (four); Edzell; Fairlie; Falkirk (six); Fergushill; Firth; Friockheim; Galston; Glasgow (five); Glengarnock; Glengowan; Grahamstown; Halfway House; Harthill; Hoddom; Holm (two); Hurlford; Invergordon; Kilbirnie; Kilmalcolm; Kilmarnock; Kilmaurs; Kilsyth (two); Kirkpatrick; Kirriemuir (two); Lanark; Lanark Middle Ward; Lesmahagow; Lochgelly; Longhope; Lowick; Midmar; Motherwell; Muir of Ord; Musselburgh; Neilston; Newmilns; Newmilns and Greenholm; Newtyle; Nigg; Ochiltree; Perth (three); Port Glasgow (four); Port Gordon (three); Renfrew (three); Ross-shire; Rossie; St. Andrews; St. Margaret's Hope; Saltcoats; Scotstoun; Shotts; Skelmorlie (three); South Shields; Stenhousemuir; Stenness; Stirling; Stonehouse (two); Stornoway (four); Strathaven; Strathmore; Strichen; Stromness; Thornhill (two); Thurso (two); Ullapool; Wellbank; and Wishaw; to lie upon the Table 810

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.—Petitions against; from Alnwick; Biggleswade; Lindfield; and Nottingham; to lie upon the Table 811

MILK DEPÔTS (LONDON) BILL.—Petition from Woolwich, in favour; to lie upon the Table 811

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.—Petition from Sheffield, against; to lie upon the Table 811

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS (SUNDAY) BILL.—Petition from Bewdley, in favour; to lie upon the Table 811

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RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Newfoundland.—Copy presented, of Report on the Foreign Trade and Commerce of Newfoundland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 811

United Free Church of Scotland and the Free Church of Scotland (Litigation) (Royal Commission to Sir John Cheyne).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 19th April; *Mr. Black*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 148] 812

Navy (Gunnery).—Copy presented, of Result of Gunlayers Competition in His Majesty's Fleet, 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 812

Turkey (No. 2, 1905).—Copy presented, of further Correspondence respecting the Affairs of South-Eastern Europe [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 812

Trade Reports (Annual Series).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3359 and 3360 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 812

Ultimus Hæres (Scotland) (Account and List of Estates).—Return ordered, "of Abstract Account of the receipts and payments of the King's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer in Scotland in the year ended the 31st day of December, 1904, in the Administration of Estates and Treasure Trove on behalf of the Crown."

"And of Alphabetical List of Estates which fell to the Crown as Ultimus Hæres in Scotland administered by the King's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer, in the same year."—(*Mr. Victor Cavendish*) 812

Outrages (Ireland).—Return ordered, "showing the number and nature of all Outrages and other Offences of an indictable character reported by the Police in each county in Ireland from the 1st day of December, 1904, to the 19th day of April, 1905, inclusive."—(*Mr. Walter Long*) 812

Congested Districts Board (Ireland).—Return ordered, "showing for each County in the Congested Districts; (1) the acreage of Untenanted and Tenanted Lands acquired by the Board since the passing of the Irish Land Act, 1903, to the 31st day of March, 1905, with a view to the enlargement of small holdings, and the amount of the purchase money for such lands; and (2) the acreage of Untenanted and Tenanted Lands for the purchase of which the Board is in negotiation with vendors."—(*Mr. Walter Long*) 812

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Returns of Public Revenue (Interception) and Gross Departmental Expenditure.—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 813

Irish National Teacher's Pension Fund.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 813

Accounts of General Lighthouse Fund.—Question, Mr. Charles McArthur (Liverpool Exchange); Answer, Mr. Bonar Law 814

Foreigners holding British Pilotage Certificates.—Question, Mr. Llewellyn (Somersetshire, N.); Answer, Mr. Bonar Law 814

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ALIENS BILL—RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL REFUGEES.—Question, Mr. H. Lawson (Tower Hamlets, Mile End); Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas 814

WOODFORD AND WANSTEAD—PROPOSED JOINT HOSPITAL BOARD.—Question, Mr. Louis Sinclair (Essex, Romford); Answer, Mr. Grant Lawson 815

BELMULLET POLICE FORCE.—Question, Mr. O'Kelly (Mayo, N.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 815

RURAL DISTRICT COUNCILLORS AS EXTERN TEACHERS OF MALE EVENING SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. O'Kelly; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 816

CLAIMS OF DUTCH BURGHERS FOR GOODS COMMANDEERED DURING SOUTH AFRICAN WAR.—Question, Mr. Marks (Kent, Thanet); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton .. 816

JAMAICA FRUIT INDUSTRY—SUBSIDY TO ELDER-DEMPSTER LINE.—Question, Colonel Lockwood (Essex, Epping); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 816

MAIL CONTRACT TO THE WEST INDIES.—Question, Master of Elibank (Edinburgh, Midlothian); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 817

SANDHURST ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE—CADETS REPORTED TO THE COMMANDANT.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 817

THE JAMAICA GARRISON.—Question, Sir Thomas Dewar (Tower Hamlets, St. George's); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 818

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

MILITARY EXPENDITURE IN SOUTH AFRICA.—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) 819

REDUCTION OF TEA DUTY—CLEARANCES FROM BOND.—Question, Mr. Slack (Hertfordshire, St. Albans); Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.) 819

WEST INDIAN PATENT STILL SPIRIT.—Questions, Mr. Nolan (Louth, S.) and Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answers, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 820

RETURNS OF PUBLIC REVENUE (INTERCEPTION) AND GROSS DEPARTMENTAL EXPENDITURE.—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answer, The Financial Secretary of the Treasury (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.) 820

SCOTLAND AND THE UNEMPLOYED BILL.—Questions, Mr. Black (Banffshire) and Mr. Keir Hardie; Answers, The Lord Advocate (Mr. Scott Dickson, Glasgow, Bridgton) 821

YOUGHAL AUXILIARY LUNATIC ASYLUM.—Questions, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Captain Donelan (Cork, E.); Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.); Mr. T. W. Russell (Tyrone, S.); Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.) 821

MANUFACTURE OF ALCOHOL FROM POTATOES IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Nolan; Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 824

Irish National Teachers' Pension Fund.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 824

Government Redistribution Proposals.—Question, Mr. Lambert (Devonshire, South Molton); Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 824

Dursey Island Eviction.—Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor (Liverpool, Scotland); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 826

NEW BILLS.

Cottage Homes Bill.—"To authorise the provision of Cottage Homes for the Aged Poor," presented by Mr. John Hutton; supported by Mr. Wharton, Mr. Brigg, Sir Ernest Flower, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Goulding, Mr. Paulton, Mr. Joseph Pease, Mr. T. W. Russell, and Sir William Wilson-Todd; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, May 31st, and to be printed. [Bill 195] 826

Education (Provision of Meals) (No. 2) Bill.—"To amend The Education Act, 1902," presented by Mr. Arthur Henderson; supported by Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Crooks, Mr. Bell, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. John Wilson, (Durham), Mr. Johnson, Mr. Broadhurst, Sir John Gorst, Mr. Thomas Richards, Dr. Macnamara, and Mr. Keir Hardie; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 196] 826

Elementary Education (Feeding of Children) (No. 2) Bill.—"To make provision for the Feeding of Children in Public Elementary Schools," presented by Mr. Claude Hay; supported by Mr. James Hope, Dr. Macnamara, Sir Albert Rollit, Sir Ernest Flower, Mr. Coghill, and Mr. Ridley; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 197] 827

Ways and Means (April 10th) Report.—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [April 12th], "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the First Resolution:—

Exchequer Bonds.

1. "That for the purpose of paying off any Exchequer bonds issued under the Supplemental War Loan Acts of 1900, any sums not exceeding ten millions pounds be raised by the issue of Exchequer bonds to be current, subject to the provisions for the redemption of the total issue, for a period of ten years, and that in each year of that period one-tenth part of the total issue of the new bonds be drawn for repayment and redeemed by the application for the purpose of the requisite part of the new sinking fund, and that the permanent annual charge for the National Debt be increased so as to be £28,000,000. That any expenses incurred in connection with raising or paying off any such sums, and the principal of and interest on any such sums, be charged on the Consolidated Fund, and, as to the interest, be paid as part of the permanent annual charge for the National Debt."

Question again proposed.

Mr. Cohen (Islington, E.) 827
Mr. McKenna (Monmouthshire, W.) 828
Mr. Ritchie (Croydon) 829
Mr. Black (Banffshire) 831

Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) .. 833
Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) .. 837
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.) .. 839
Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.) .. 845
Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.) .. 847
Sir Robert Reid (Dumfries Burghs) .. 851
Mr. Kearley (Devonport) .. 853
Sir M. Hicks Beach (Bristol, W.) .. 854
Mr. John Wilson (Falkirk Burghs) .. 855

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 191 ; Noes, 102. (Divison List No. 147.)

WAYS AND MEANS [10TH APRIL] REPORT.—Order read, for further consideration of Second, Third, and Fourth Resolutions.

Resolutions again read.

CONTINUANCE OF ADDITIONAL CUSTOMS DUTIES ON TOBACCO, BEER, AND SPIRITS.

2. "That the additional Customs duties on tobacco, beer, and spirits imposed by sections two, three, four, and five of The Finance Act, 1900 (including any increased duties imposed by section five of that Act), shall continue to be charged until the first day of July, nineteen hundred and six."

CONTINUANCE OF ADDITIONAL EXCISE DUTIES ON BEER AND SPIRITS.

3. "That the additional Excise duties on beer and spirits imposed by sections six and seven of The Finance Act, 1900, shall continue to be charged until the first day of July, nineteen hundred and six."

AMENDMENT OF LAW.

4. "That it is expedient to amend the law relating to the National Debt, Customs, and Inland Revenue."

Resolutions agreed to.

WAYS AND MEANS [11TH APRIL].—Resolution reported.

TEA.—"That there shall be charged on and after the first day of July, ninteen hundred and five, until the first day of July, nineteen hundred and six, the following Customs Import duty on Tea (that is to say), Tea, the pound, Sixpence."

Resolution agreed to.

WAYS AND MEANS [12TH APRIL].—Resolution reported.

INCOME TAX.—"That Income Tax shall be charged for the year beginning the sixth day of April, nineteen hundred and five, at the rate of one shilling in the pound."

Resolution agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by the Chairman of Ways and Means, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Victor Cavendish.

FINANCE BILL.—"To grant certain duties of Customs and Inland Revenue, to alter other duties, and to amend the Law relating to Customs and Inland Revenue and the National Debt, and to make other provisions for the financial arrangements of the year," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 198.]

POST OFFICE (TELEPHONE AGREEMENT).—Motion made, and Question proposed—"That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the Agreement of the 2nd day of February, 1905, between the Postmaster-General and the National Telephone Company, and to report whether it is desirable in the public interest that the Agreement should become binding."—(*Lord Stanley.*)

Mr. Dalziel (*Kirkcaldy Burghs*) 860
The Postmaster-General (*Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton*) .. 860
Mr. Keir Hardie (*Merthyr Tydvil*) 860
Lord Stanley 861
Mr. Kearley (*Devonport*) 862
Mr Dillon (*Mayo, E.*) 862

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Lord Stanley*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

And, there being no further Business set down for the Afternoon Sitting, Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER left the Chair until the Evening Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

ADJOURNMENT (UNDER STANDING ORDER No. 10).

Mr. T. P. O'Connor (*Liverpool, Scotland*) 862
Captain Donelan (*Cork, E.*) 876

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor.*)

Mr. T. L. Corbett (*Down, N.*) 877
Mr. Mooney (*Dublin County, S.*) 878
Mr. T. W. Russell (*Tyrone, S.*) 879
The Chief Secretary for Ireland (*Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.*) 882
Mr. Dillon (*Mayo, E.*) 889

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 74; Noes, 134. (Division List No. 148.)

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 4TH MAY, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.—The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

SUBSTITUTED BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, introduced in accordance with the provisions of The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, originating in the Lords and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—Clyde Navigation (Reconstitution) Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 897

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).—Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz. :—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill.
Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time To-morrow 897

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz :—Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill.
Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow 898

Aberdare Urban District Council Bill.—Read the third time, and passed. [New Title] 898

Colne Corporation Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 898

Halifax Corporation Bill.—Read the third time, and passed. [New Title.] 898

Stockport Corporation Bill (King's Consent signified).—Bill read the third time, and passed 898

London County Council (Money) Bill—"To regulate the Expenditure of Money by the London County Council on Capital Account during the current Financial Period and the Raising of Money to meet such Expenditure; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 898

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Local Government Provisional Order (Gas) Bill—"To confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board relating to Withnell," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 199] 898

London United Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill; Hessle Gas Bill [Lords].—Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 898

Holy Trinity, Portsea, Bill [Lords].—Reported, with an Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table 898

Marylebone Chapels Bill [Lords].—Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill to be read the third time 899

West Cumberland Electric Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords]. Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 899

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (PROVISION OF MEALS) BILL.—Petition from Harley, in favour; to lie upon the Table 899

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions for alteration; from Glasgow; and Stornoway; to lie upon the Table 899

LAND VALUES TAXATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Riccarton, in favour; to lie upon the Table 899

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Aberdeen (three); Airdrie; Ardrishaig; Ardrossan; Auchtermuchty; Banff; Bellshill; Benwhat (two); Blairgowrie; Bowmore; Carluke (two); Colmonell; Dailly; Dunbar; Dundee; Dunfermline (three); Dunning; Dunoon; Edinburgh (ten); Elgin (two); Ellenabeich; Fairlie; Glasgow; Glencraig; Grangemouth; Greenock; Haddington; Inverkeithing; Inverness; Keith; Kilburnie; Kilmalcolm; Kirkcaldy; Ladybank; Larchbank; Leslie; Lesmahagow; Leven (three); Leuchars; Linlithgow (two); Lochgelly; Longside; Mains and Strathmartin; Moffat; Monifieth; Newburgh; Newport (Fife); Nitshill; North Berwick (two); Peterhead (two); Pollokshaws; Prestonpans; Riccarton; Sandbank; Shanbryde; Strathkinners; Strathmiglo; Tarbert; Tayport; West Kilbride; Wishaw and Woodstock; to lie upon the Table 899

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Pimlico and Westminster; and St. Pancras; to lie upon the Table .. 899

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.—Petition from Nettleton, against; to lie upon the Table 900

MILK DEPÔTS (LONDON) BILL.—Petition from St. Pancras, in favour; to lie upon the Table 900

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.—Petition from Ashton-under-Lyne, in favour; to lie upon the Table 900

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RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRAINING COLLEGES (IRELAND).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 12th April; *Mr. Sloan*]; to lie upon the Table 900

CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD (IRELAND).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 3rd May; *Mr. Walter Long*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 149] 900

OUTRAGES (IRELAND).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 3rd May; *Mr. Walter Long*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 150] .. 900

POST OFFICE (PARCEL POST BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA).—Copy presented, of agreement between the Post Office of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office Department of the United States of America for the direct exchange of Parcels by Parcel Post, dated 3rd—17th February, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 900

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3361 and 3362 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 900

NATIONAL SCHOOLS (IRELAND) TEACHERS.—Return ordered, "showing—

"(1) The number of Teachers who, after completing a two years course of training, were appointed for the first time as Principal or Assistant Teachers in National Schools in Ireland in each of the three years immediately preceding the new financial arrangement of 1900, viz., 1897, 1898, 1899, distinguishing between Principal and Assistant Teachers, and between Male and Female Teachers

"(2) The classification of the Teachers so appointed, distinguishing as before between Principal and Assistant and between Male and Female Teachers.

"(3) The average total salaries paid out of Imperial Funds to the Teachers referred to in Section 1, giving the averages for Principal and Assistant Teachers separately, and for Male and Female Teachers separately.

"(4) The number of Teachers who, after completing a two years course of training, were appointed for the first time as Principal or Assistant Teachers in National Schools in Ireland in each of the years immediately following the new financial arrangement of 1900, viz., 1901, 1902, 1903, distinguishing between Principal and Assistant Teachers and between Male and Female Teachers.

"(5) The classification or grade of the Teachers so appointed, distinguishing as before between Principal and Assistant Teachers and between Male and Female Teachers.

"(6) The average total salaries paid out of Imperial Funds to the Teachers referred to in Section 4, giving the averages for Principal and Assistant Teachers separately, and for Male and Female Teachers separately."—(*Mr. Dillon.*) 900

GROSS DEPARTMENTAL EXPENDITURE.—Return ordered, "showing for the financial years 1894–5, 1904–5, and 1905–6 (estimated), respectively, the total annual Expenditure of each of the following Departments, viz.:—

"(1) Army (including Ordnance Factories).

"(3) Civil Services.

"(4) Revenue Departments; under each of the following headings for each Department, viz.:—

"(a) Expenditure from net Votes voted in Supply.

"(b) Expenditure from receipts appropriated in aid.

"(c) Expenditure out of issues to meet capital expenditure under various Acts.

"(d) Expenditure incurred on account of this Department by other Departments; together with the totals of (a), (b), (c), and (d), for each of the four Departments, and in addition a deduction, from the total of each Department, of the Expenditure incurred by that Department on account of other Departments."—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*) .. 901

PUBLIC REVENUE (INTERCEPTION).—Return ordered, "of the amounts of all Public Revenue derived from Taxes levied by Parliament and from any other sources, which are not paid into His Majesty's Exchequer, for the years 1903–4, 1904–5, and 1905–6 (estimated), with the totals in each case (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 253, of Session 1904)."—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*) 901

NAVAL EXPENDITURE (GREAT BRITAIN AND FOREIGN COUNTRIES).—Return ordered, "of the Naval Expenditure of this Country in the years 1880, 1890, 1901, 1902, 1903, and 1904, and of the Naval Expenditure of France, Russia, Germany, Japan, and America in the same years."—(*Sir Edgar Vincent.*) .. 901

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

WAGE DEDUCTIONS IN THE POTTERIES IN CONTRAVENTION OF THE TRUCK ACTS.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas 902

AMENDMENT OF THE TRUCK ACTS.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke; Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas 903

VACCINATION PROSECUTIONS AT BRIGHTON.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. Grant Lawson 904

CONSULAR REPORTS.—Question, Sir Samuel Scott (Marylebone, W.); Answer, Earl Percy 904

SCOTTISH CHURCH DISPUTE.—Question, Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 904

POST OFFICE AND NATIONAL TELEPHONE COMPANY'S EMPLOYEES.—Question, Sir John Leng (Dundee); Answer, Lord Stanley 907

POSTAL WORK AT COLERAINE.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor (Wicklow, W.); Answer, Lord Stanley 908

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CONSTRUCTION OF HARBOUR AT INNISHLYRE, NEAR WESTPORT.—Question, Dr. Ambrose (Mayo, W.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 908

SALES UNDER THE IRISH LAND ACT OF 1903.—Question, Mr. T. W. Russell (Tyrone, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 909

JAMAICA STEAMSHIP SERVICE.—Question, Mr. Guthrie (Tower Hamlets, Bow); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 909

AMOUNTS RECEIVED BY ROYAL PATRIOTIC CORPORATION TOWARDS SOLDIERS EFFECTS FUND UNDER THE REGIMENTAL DEPARTMENTS ACT.—Question, Mr. Kearley (Devonport); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 911

PROMOTION OF WARRANT OFFICERS (ROYAL ARTILLERY) AGE LIMITS.—Question, Mr. Kearley; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 911

ARMY ESTIMATES—VOTE 7.—Question, Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 912

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

H.M.S. "STORMCOCK"—BRITISH GUNBOATS AT IRISH EVICTIONS.—Questions, Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.); Captain Donelan (Cork, E.), Mr. Reddy (King's County, Birr), and Mr. Patrick O'Brien, (Kilkenny); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge.) 912

DISCHARGES FROM CHATHAM DOCKYARD.—Question, Mr. Tuff (Rochester); Answer, Mr. Pretyman 914

NAVAL CONSTRUCTION.—Question, Mr. Partington (Derbyshire, High Peak); Answer, Mr. Pretyman 914

FLOGGING IN MILITARY PRISONS.—Questions, Mr. Tomkinson (Cheshire, Crewe); Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) 914

POWERS OF THE TRANSVAAL ASSEMBLY.—Question, Mr. Lambert (Devonshire, South Molton); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington) 915

BRITISH LABOUR IN SOUTH AFRICA.—Question, Mr. Edmund Robertson; Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 915

RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT IN ORANGE RIVER COLONY.—Question, Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 916

MINERAL CONCESSIONS IN INDIA.—Question, Mr. Samuel Smith (Flintshire); Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) 916

LORD KITCHENER AND THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT.—Questions, Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs) and Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answers, Mr. Brodrick .. 917

ARSENIC IN BEER.—Question, Dr. Hutchison (Sussex, Rye); Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.) 918

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Financial Returns.—Questions, Mr. Edmund Robertson, Mr. McCrae (Edinburgh, E.) and Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Answers, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 918

Grants to University Colleges.—Questions, Mr. T. W. Russell (Tyrone, S.); Answers, The Financial Secretary of the Treasury (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.) 919

Motor-Car Speed Regulations.—Questions, Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.) and Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland; Answers, The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Grant Lawson, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) 920

Alien Chauffeurs.—Question, Mr. Scott Montagu (Hampshire, New Forest); Answer, Mr. Grant Lawson 921

Local Authorities and Motor-Car Regulations.—Questions, Mr. Cawley (Lancashire, Prestwich) and Mr. Cathcart Wason; Answer, Mr. Grant Lawson 921

Local Taxation Accounts.—Question, Mr. Benn (Devonport); Answer, Mr. Grant Lawson 922

Motor-Car Fatalities at Easter.—Question, Mr. Lambert; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's) 923

Reckless Driving of Motor-Cars.—Questions, Mr. Lambert and Mr. Scott-Montagu; Answers, Mr. Akers-Douglas 923

Motor-Car Traffic between Hyde Park Corner and Kew Bridge.—Question, Captain Donelan, Mr. Gibson Bowles, Sir John Gorst (Cambridge University), Mr. Cawley, Mr. Channing; Answers, Mr. Akers-Douglas .. 924

Motor Car Casualties.—Questions, Captain Donelan and Mr. Scott-Montagu; Answers, Mr. Akers-Douglas 925

Police and Cyclists on the Brighton Road.—Question, Mr. Cawley; Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas 926

Flogging in Civil Prisons.—Questions, Mr. Tomkinson; Answers, Mr. Akers-Douglas 926

The Aliens Bill—Victims of Religious Persecution.—Question, Sir E. Durning Lawrence; Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas 926

International Conference on Agriculture.—Question, Mr. Channing; Answer, The President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes, Huntingdonshire, Ramsey) 927

London Port and Docks.—Question, Mr. Benn; Answer, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Bonar Law, Glasgow, Blackfriars) .. 927

Normanton Postal Arrangements.—Question, Mr. Parrott (Yorkshire, W.R., Normanton); Answer, The Postmaster-General (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton) 928

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TELEPHONE AGREEMENT.—Question, Dr. Macnamara; Answer, Lord Stanley 928

SCOTLAND AND THE AGRICULTURAL RATES ACT.—Question, Mr. Black (Banffshire); Answer, The Lord-Advocate (Mr. Scott Dickson, Glasgow, Bridgton) 928

IRISH NATIONAL BOARD OF EDUCATION NEW RULES.—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.) 929

THE IRISH ESTATES COMMISSIONERS.—Question, Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 929

REINSTATEMENT OF EVICTED TENANTS IN IRELAND.—Questions, Mr. Dillon; Answers, Mr. Walter Long 930

INSTRUCTIONS OF THE ESTATES COMMISSIONERS TO THEIR INSPECTORS.—Questions, Mr. Dillon and Mr. T. W. Russell; Answers, Mr. Walter Long .. 931

THE ESTATES COMMISSIONERS AND THE LORD LIEUTENANT.—Questions, Mr. Dillon; Answers, Mr. Walter Long 934

AFFORESTRY IN IRELAND.—Question, Captain Donelan; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 935

IRISH POOR LAW SURGICAL CONTRACTS.—Question, Mr. O'Kelly (Mayo, N.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 936

CLOGHER VALLEY POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS.—Question, Mr. T. W. Russell; Answer, Lord Stanley 936

BALLINA POST OFFICE MEDICAL OFFICER.—Question, Mr. O'Kelly; Answer, Lord Stanley 936

VACANT LORDSHIP OF THE TREASURY.—Question, Mr. Dalziel; Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 937

THE VOTE OF CENSURE DEBATE.—Questions, Mr. Dillon and Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour and Sir Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) 937

THE EAST HAM EDUCATION DIFFICULTY.—Question, Mr. Ernest Grey (West Ham); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 937

ADJOURNMENT.

MR. ERNEST GREY, Member for West Ham (North Division), rose in his place, and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, viz., "The refusal of the Council of the Borough of East Ham to administer the Education Act, 1902, as from the 31st instant, the prospect of other local authorities adopting at once a similar decision, and the policy of the Government in respect thereto;" but the pleasure of the House not having been signified, Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than forty Members having accordingly risen.

The Motion stood over, under Standing Order No. 10, until the Evening Sitting, this day 938

STANDING COMMITTEES (CHAIRMAN'S PANEL).—Mr. JOHN EDWARD ELLIS reported from the Chairman's Panel; That they had appointed Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in the place of Mr. John Edward Ellis.

Report to lie upon the Table 933

NEW BILLS

Resident Magistrates (Belfast) Bill.—"To make provision for the appointment and remuneration of Resident Magistrates in Belfast," presented by Mr. Wolff; supported by Sir James Haslett, Mr. Sloan, Mr. Charles Craig, and Mr. T. L. Corbett; to be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 200.] 939

Winter Assizes (Ireland) Bill.—"To extend the jurisdiction of Winter Assizes in Ireland," presented by Mr. Wolff; supported by Sir James Haslett Mr. Sloan, Mr. Charles Craig, and Mr. Thomas Corbett; to be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 201.] 939

SUPPLY [5TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1905–6. CLASS I.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £31,700, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for the Houses of Parliament Buildings."

Mr. Harwood (Bolton) 940

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A (New Works, Alterations, and Additions) be reduced by £100."—(*Mr. Harwood.*)

Mr. Wylie (Dumbartonshire) 942
Captain Norton (Newington, W.) 944
Sir J. Fergusson (Manchester, N.E.) 945
Mr. Brigg (Yorks, W.R., Keighley) 945
Sir George Bartley (Islington, N.) 946
Mr. Emmott (Oldham) 947
Mr. Mildmay (Devonshire, Totnes) 947
Major Seely (Isle of Wight) 947
Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) 948
Colonel Welby (Taunton) 950
Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.) 950
Lord Balcarres (Lancashire, Chorley) 953
Sir Brampton Gurdon (Norfolk, N.) 957

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Mr. Forde Ridley (*Bethnal Green, S.W.*) 957
Mr. Swift MacNeill (*Donegal, S.*) 958
Sir H. Meysey-Thompson (*Staffordshire, Handsworth*) 959
Mr. Schwann (*Manchester, N.*) 960
Mr. Dalziel (*Kirkcaldy Burghs*) 960
Mr. Elliott (*Durham*) 962
Major Seely 963
Lord Balcarres 963
Mr. Patrick O'Brien (*Kilkenny*) 964
Mr. Herbert Samuel (*Yorkshire, Cleveland*) 964
Lord Balcarres 965

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 114 ; Noes, 202. (Division List No. 149.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. Swift MacNeill 967
Mr. Dalziel 969
Mr. Whitley (*Halifax*) 969
Lord Balcarres 970
Mr. Gibson Bowles 970
Lord Balcarres 971

Original Question put, and agreed to.

2. £36,500, to complete the sum for Royal Palaces.

Mr. Whitley 972
Lord Balcarre 972
Colonel Welby 972

Vote agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That a sum, not exceeding £7,900, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for Expenditure in respect of Osborne.' "

Mr. Whitley 973
Lord Balcarres s 974
Mr. Gibson Bowles 975
Mr. Brigg 976
Mr. Whitley 977

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That a sum, not exceeding £7,800, be granted for the said service."—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

Lord Balcarres 977

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

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Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum not exceeding £62,400, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens."

Mr. Gibson Bowles 978
Sir Arthur Hayter (*Walsall*) 979
Sir Frederick Banbury (*Camberwell, Peckham*) 980
Sir Howard Vincent (*Sheffield, Central*) 980
Mr. Cremer (*Shoreditch, Haggerston*) 980
Sir John Gorst (*Cambridge University*) 982
Mr. Mooney (*Dublin County, S.*) 982
Lord Balcarres 982

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next; Committee also report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

ADJOURNMENT (UNDER STANDING ORDER NO. 10) (EDUCATION ACT, 1902. BOROUGH OF EAST HAM).

Mr. Ernest Gray (*West Ham, N.*) 984
Mr. Cripps (*Lancashire, Stretford*) 991

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn." —(*Mr. Ernest Gray.*)

Dr. Macnamara (*Camberwell, N.*) 994
Mr. David Morgan (*Essex, Walthamstow*) 996
Sir James Joicey (*Durham, Chester-le-Street*) 997
Mr. Louis Sinclair (*Essex, Romford*) 997
Mr. Ellis Griffith (*Anglesey*) 999
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (*Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester E.*) 1001
Mr. J. W. Wilson (*Worcestershire, N.*) 1013
Mr. Emmott (*Oldham*) 1014
Colonel Bowles (*Middlesex, Enfield*) 1016

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 116; Noes, 159. (Division List No. 150.

SUPPLY (5TH ALLOTTED DAY).

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1905-6.—CLASS I.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £62,400, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens."

Mr. Whitley (Halifax) 1019
Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil) 1019
Mr. J. H. Lewis (Flint Boroughs) 1020
Mr. Crooks (Woolwich) 1020

And, it being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next

Land Drainage and Sewers Bill.—Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn 1020

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 5TH MAY, 1905

The House met at Twelve of the Clock

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.—The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr SPEAKER, owing to continued indisposition

Whereupon Mr JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order 1021

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time upon Monday next .. 1021

Andover Lighting and Power Bill.—Read the third time, and passed .. 1021

Bristol Corporation Bill (KING'S CONSENT SIGNIFIED).—Bill read the third time, and passed 1021

Croydon Corporation Bill.—Swansea Corporation Bill. Read the third time, and passed 1021

Grangemouth Waterworks and Burgh Extension Order Confirmation Bill.—Considered; to be read the third time upon Monday next 1021

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill.—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill. Read a second time and committed 1021

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Haverfordwest, Leicester, Scarborough, and Wallasey" presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 202] 1022

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Billericay (Rural), Eton (Rural) (two), and the Houghton-le-Spring and Hetton and the Rugby Joint Hospital Districts," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 203] .. 1022

PETITIONS.

CRIMINAL NEW TRIALS BILL.—Petition from Montrose, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1022

JUVENILE SMOKING BILL.—Petition from Montrose, in favour: to lie upon the Table 1022

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition of the Scottish Licensed Trade Defence Association, against; to lie upon the Table .. 1022

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour; from
Aberdeen (four); Alva (four); Annan; Ayr (two); Ballachulish; Ballis-
Brydekirk; Cardross; Carluke; Cleland; Coatbridge (two); Cupar Angus;
ston; Banchory; Blythswood; Bo'ness; Bonhill; Brechin (three);
Dalziel; Denny; Dumfries; Dundonald; Dunoon and Kilmun; Dunoon
and Rothesay; Edinburgh (two); Fauldhouse; Fraserburgh; Galashiels
(two); Glasgow (eight); Gourdon; Govan (two); Grangemouth; Gullane;
Hotts Bridge; Huntley; Inch; Jedburgh (two); Kames; Kelso; Kilton;
Kemnay (two); Kilbowie; Kilfinan; Kinross (two); Kirkintillock (two);
Largs; Longside (two); Milton of Campsie; Montrose; Morningside;
Mount Florida; New Monkland; Port Bannatyne; Port Glasgow;
Peterculter, Rosehearty; Rothesay (five); St. Fergus; Sanchie;
Selkirk (two); Stonehaven (two); Thurso; Tillicoultry; Turriff;
and Woodside; to lie upon the Table 1022

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.—Petition from Montrose, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1023

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.—Petitions against; from Bishops Ceeve; Leigh; Kemerton; Oxenton; Tewkesbury; Tirley; Tredington; and Twyning; to lie upon the Table 1023

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.—Petition from Montrose, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1023

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PHARMACY BILL.—Petition from Montrose, in favour; to lie upon the Table .. 1023

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.—Petition from Ecclesall Bierlaw, against: to lie upon the Table 1023

SALE OF INTOXICANTS TO CHILDREN BILL.—Petition from Montrose, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1023

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.—Petition from Montrose, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1023

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

IRISH LAND ACT, 1903.—Paper [presented 17th April] to be printed. [No. 151] 1033
TRAINING COLLEGES (IRELAND).—Return [presented 4th May] to be printed. [No. 152] 1023

POLLING DISTRICTS (BOROUGH OF HUDDERSFIELD).—Copy presented, of Order made by the Council of the Borough of Huddersfield re-dividing the Lockwood Ward of the Borough into Polling Districts [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1024
BOILER EXPLOSION ACTS, 1882 AND 1890.—Copy presented, of Report to the Secretary of the Board of Trade upon the working of the Boiler Explosions Acts, 1882 and 1890, with Appendices [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1024

WEST INDIES.—Copy presented, of Despatch to the Governors of the West Indian Colonies respecting the West Indian Mail Contract [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1024

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (SCOTLAND).—Copy presented, of Tenth Annual Report of the Local Government Board for Scotland, 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1024

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3363 and 3364 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1024

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.—Lunacy. Copy of Report to the Lord Chancellor of the number of visits made, the number of Patients seen, and the number of miles travelled by the Visitors of Lunatics between October 1st, 1904, and March 31st, 1905 [by Act] .. 1024

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

REFUSAL OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD TO SANCTION ALTERATION IN DIET AT READING VAGRANT WARDS.—Question, Mr. Rufus Isaacs (Berkshire, Reading); Answer, Mr. Grant Lawson 1024

GRADUATED INCOME TAX IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES.—Question, Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland); Answer, Earl Percy 1025

IMPORTATION OF PIGMIES FOR PUBLIC EXHIBITION.—Question, Sir Brampton Gurdon (Norfolk, N.); Answer, Earl Percy 1025

WORKING OF FERTILISERS AND FEEDING STUFFS ACT, 1893 — FURTHER LEGISLATION.—Question, Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes 1026

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION.—Question, Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, Mr Akers-Douglas 1027

WAGES OF QUALIFIED POST OFFICE LEARNERS ATTACHED FOR TEMPORARY DUTY ELSEWHERE.—Question, Mr. William Abraham (Cork County, N.E.); Answer, Lord Stanley 1027

HOURS OF TELEGRAPHISTS IN DUNDEE POST OFFICE.—Question, Mr. Shackleton (Lancashire, Clitheroe); Answer, Lord Stanley 1027

CENTRAL TELEGRAPH OFFICE STAFF—CASE OF TELEGRAPHIST BOOTH.—Question, Mr. Claude Hay (Shoreditch, Hoxton); Answer, Lord Stanley 1028

CAPITAL LIABILITIES.—Question, Mr. McKenna (Monmouthshire, N.); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1029

RATE OF INTEREST ON EXCHEQUER BORROWINGS AND CONSOLS REDEEMED DURING 1904–5.—Question, Mr. McKenna; Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1029

YIELD OF THE LAND TAX.—Question, Mr. Runciman (Dewsbury); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1030

GRADUATED INCOME-TAX—BRITISH COLONIES.—Question, Mr. Herbert Samuel; Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1030

RIGHTS OF BRITISH INDIANS IN CAPE COLONY.—Question, Mr. Runciman; Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1030

THE ARTILLERY SCHOOL OF GUNNERY.—Question, Captain Norton (Newington, W.); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1030

DISCHARGE OF CIVILIAN WAR OFFICE EMPLOYEES AT PORTSMOUTH.—Question, Mr. Reginald Lucas (Portsmouth); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1031

Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill [SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Hunter Craig (Lancashire, Govan) 1032

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Sir Lewis McIver (Edinburgh, E.) 1039

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Sir Lewis McIver.*)

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Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. Thomas Shaw (*Hawick Burghs*) 1049
Sir Charles Renshaw (*Renfrew, W.*) 1053
Mr. Leif Jones (*Westmorland, Appleby*) 1058
Sir Mark Stewart (*Kirkcudbrightshire*) 1065
Sir Wilfrid Lawson (*Cornwall, Camborne*) 1067
The Lord Advocate (*Mr. Scott Dickson, Glasgow, Bridgton*) 1072
Mr. Whittaker (*Yorks, W.R., Spen Valley*) 1076
Sir Robert Reid (*Dumfries Burghs*) 1080
Sir Gilbert Parker (*Gravesend*) 1084

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 109 ; Noes, 142. (Division List No. 151.)

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Second Reading put off for six months.

NEW BILL.

Factory and Workshop Act (1901) Amendment.—Bill to amend The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, in respect of Laundries, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Cameron Corbett, Sir Hugh Shaw-Stewart, Mr. Arthur Henderson, and Mr. Trevelyan.

Factory and Workshop Act (1901) Amendment Bill.—"To amend The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, in respect of Laundries," presented accordingly, and read the first time ; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 204.] 1087

Whereupon Mr. Deputy-Speaker adjourned the House without Question put, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 3.

Adjourned at a quarter before Six o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS : MONDAY, 8th MAY, 1905.

Sat First.—The Lord Chelmsford sat first in Parliament after the death of his father 1089

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with :—Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Liverpool, etc.) [H.L.].

Also the Certificate that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with :—Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water Company (Petition for Bill).

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And also the Certificates that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—Acton Sewage ; Birmingham Corporation ; Brentwood Gas ; Great Berkhampstead Gas ; Ilfracombe Harbour and Improvement ; London Gas ; Otley Improvement ; Great Northern Railway ; Nottingham and Retford Railway ; Seaham Gas ; Croydon Gas ; Dublin Corporation (Superannuation) ; Hitchin and District Gas.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 1089

Lautour's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. Witnesses ordered to attend on the Second Reading of the Bill, two to produce documents 1089

Matlock Bath Improvement Bill [H.L.].—Witnesses ordered to attend the Select Committee 1089

Earl of Stamford's Cheshire Estate.—Petition for a Private Bill, together with a copy of the proposed Bill annexed thereto ; read, and referred to two English Judges 1089

Corbett Estate Bill [H.L.].—Judges' Report received ; Bill presented, and read 1ª 1089

Ocean Accident and Guarantee Corporation Bill [H.L.]—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn 1090

Clay Cross Railway (Abandonment) Bill.—Read 2ª, and committed .. 1090

Great Central Railway Bill. [H.L.].—Dearne Valley Railway Bill [H.L.] ; Sheffield University Bill [H.L.]. Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons 1090

Southampton and Winchester Great Western Junction Railway (Abandonment) Bill.—Read 3ª, and passed 1090

Brompton, Chatham, Gillingham, and Rochester Water Bill.—Read 3ª, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons 1090

Whitechapel and Bow Railway Bill.—Great Western Railway (New Railways) Bill ; Aylesbury Gas Bill ; Ealing Corporation Bill ; South Oxfordshire Water and Gas Bill ; Great Western Railway (Additional Powers) Bill ; Aberdare Urban District Council Bill ; Colne Corporation Bill ; Stockport Corporation Bill ; Halifax Corporation Bill ; Andover Lighting and Power Bill ; Bristol Corporation Bill ; Croydon Corporation Bill ; Swansea Corporation Bill. Brought from the Commons ; read 1ª ; and referred to the Examiners 1090

Cordoba and Rosario Railway Bill [H.L.].—Entre Rios Railways Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to 1090

Worcestershire County Council Bridges Bill.—Examiner's Certificate of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Tuesday, the 16th instant 1090

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Wellingborough and District Tramroads and Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.].—The order made on the 31st of March last appointing certain Lords the Select Committee to consider the Bill, discharged 1090

Bridgwater Canals Bill [H.L.].—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the Promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. The Orders made on the 3rd and 31st of March last, discharged. Ordered, That the Bill be not further proceeded with 1091

Sunderland and South Shields Water Bill.—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the Promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be not further proceeded with .. 1091

Abertillery Urban District Water Bill. [H.L.].—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the Promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. The Orders of the 21st of February and the 31st of March last, discharged. Ordered, That the Bill be not further proceeded with 1091

Barrymore Estate Bill; [H.L.] Leven's Patent Bill [H.L.].—Committed .. 1091

Hythe Corporation Bill [H.L.].—Whitby Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Mansfield Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Hastings Tramways Bill [H.L.]; London Squares and Enclosures (Preservation) Bill [H.L.]; Nottingham Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Sandgate Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Blackpool Improvement Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Denman be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Shute (*V. Barrington*); read, and agreed to 1091

Bangor (County Down) Water and Improvement Bill [H.L.].—Matlock Bath Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]; Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Formby Township Bill [H.L.]; Humber Conservancy Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Chelmsford be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Earl of Westmeath; read, and agreed to .. 1091

Harbour, etc., Bills.—Report of the Board of Trade on the Humber Conservancy Bill [H.L.]. Ordered to be laid before the House (The Lord Privy Seal (*M. Salisbury*) 1091

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS (RECESS).—The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the following Papers, having been commanded to be presented to this House by His Majesty, had been so presented on the following dates by delivery to the Clerk of the Parliaments, pursuant to Standing Order No. CXI., viz. :—

Charity Commission. Fifty-second Report of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales. (April 17.)

Egypt, No. 1 (1905)—Reports by His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General on the finances, administration, and condition of Egypt and the Soudan in 1904. (April 17.)

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Board of Education :—

I. Regulations for secondary schools from 1st August, 1905, to 31st July, 1906. (April 17.)

II. Special reports on educational subjects. Volume 15.—School training for the home duties of women. Part I. The teaching of "domestic science" in the United States of America. (April 27.)

Free and United Free Churches (Scotland) :—

I. Royal Commission on Churches.

Vol. I.—Reports.

Vol. II.—Minutes of evidence and appendices. (April 18.)

II. Departmental Commission. Interim Report to the Secretary for Scotland by Sir John Cheyne, K.C. (May 3.)

Education (Scotland). Report and Papers relating to the training of teachers for the year 1903–1904. (April 18.)

Labour Statistics (Board of Trade) (Labour Department). Tenth Abstract of Labour Statistics of the United Kingdom, 1902–1904. (April 18.)

Transvaal :—

I. Further correspondence relating to labour in the Transvaal mine (in continuation of [Cd. 2183]). (April 18.)

II. Papers relating to Constitutional changes in the Transvaal. (April 27.)

III. Despatch transmitting Letters Patent and Order in Council providing for Constitutional changes in the Transvaal. (April 27.)

Education (Ireland) 1904. Annual Report of the Commissioners of Education in Ireland, for the year 1904. (April 27.)

Agrarian Offences (Provinces) (Ireland). Return for the year ended December 31st, 1904. (April 27.)

Lunacy (Scotland). Forty-seventh Annual Report of the General Board of Commissioners in Lunacy for Scotland. (April 27.)

Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887. Return of the number of Eviction Notices filed during the Quarter ended December 31st, 1904. (April 27.)

Trade. Annual Statement of the Trade of the United Kingdom with Foreign Countries and British Possessions, 1904, compared with the four preceding years. Vol. I. (Summaries, Abstract, and detailed Tables of Imports and Exports). (April 27.)

Factory and Workshop (Laundries). List of religious and charitable institutions in which laundries are carried on. (April 27.)

Explosives (Explosion at Messrs. Eley Brothers' Factory, Edmonton, Middlesex. Report to the right hon. the Secretary of State for the Home Department by Captain J. H. Thomson, His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Explosives, on the circumstances attending an explosion of collodion cotton which occurred at the factory of Messrs. Eley Brothers, Limited, at Edmonton, Middlesex, on March 7th, 1905. (April 27.)

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TREATY SERIES.

No. 9. (1905. Convention between the United Kingdom and France respecting commercial relations between France and India; signed at London, February 19th, 1903. (Ratifications exchanged at London, March 27th, 1905.)

No. 10 (1905). Convention between the United Kingdom and France respecting commercial relations between France and the British Protectorates of East Africa, Central Africa, and Uganda; signed at London, 23rd February, 1903. (Ratifications exchanged at London, 27th March, 1905.)

No. 11 (1905). Convention between the United Kingdom and France respecting commercial relations between France and the Seychelles Islands; signed at London, 16th April, 1902. (Ratifications exchanged at London, 27th March, 1905.)

No. 12 (1905). Convention between the United Kingdom and France respecting commercial relations between France and Ceylon; signed at London, 19th February, 1903. (Ratifications exchanged at London, 27th March, 1905.)

No. 13 (1905). Convention between the United Kingdom and Japan respecting commercial relations between Japan and India; signed at Tokio, 29th August, 1904. (Ratifications exchanged at Tokio, 15th March, 1905). (April 27.)

TRADE REPORTS.

I. Annual Series.

No. 3342. Germany (Chemnitz and Saxony).
No. 3343. Austria-Hungary (Finances and General Economic Conditions of Austria-Hungary).
No. 3344. China (Canton).
No. 3345. Chile (Coquimbo).
No. 3346. France (Calais).
No. 3347. Argentine Republic (Buenos Ayres).
No. 3348. United States (Texas).
No. 3349. United States (Chicago).
No. 3350. Denmark (Iceland). (April 27.)
No. 3351. Russia (Poland and Lithuania).
No. 3352. Spain (Bilbao). (April 28.)
No. 3353. United States (New York). (April 29.)
No. 3354. China (Newchwang).
No. 3355. Peru (Iquitos). (May 2.)
No. 3356. Portugal (Azores).
No. 3357. Turkey (Constantinople).
No. 3358. Germany (Pomerania). (May 3.)
No. 3359. Turkey (Trebizond Vilayet).
No. 3360. Persia (Arabistan). (May 4.)
No. 3361. Greece (Thessaly).
No. 3362. Argentine Republic (Rosaria). (May 5.)
No. 3363. Turkey (Aleppo and Andana).
No. 3364. China (Wuhu). (May 6.)

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II. (Miscellaneous Series).

No. 633. Italy (Mineral Wealth of the Provinces of Siena and Grosseto). (May 2.)

Underfed Children at Public Elementary Schools. Circulars issued in April, 1905, by the Local Government Board and the Board of Education as to the cases of children attending public elementary schools who are without adequate nourishment. (April 29.)

Wellington College. Report of the Governors for the year ended 31st December, 1904; with accounts. (May 1.)

Mines and Quarries. Reports of His Majesty's Inspectors of Mines and Quarries for the year 1904. (May 1.)

Reformatory and Industrial Schools (Great Britain). Forty-eighth Report, for the year 1904, of the Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools. Part I. List of Schools and detailed Reports. (May 1.)

Navy (Gunnery). Result of Gunlayers Competition in His Majesty's Fleet 1904. (May 3.)

Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland). Fourth Annual General Report of the Department, 1903–1904. (May 3.)

Turkey, No. 2 (1905). Further correspondence respecting the Affairs of South Eastern Europe (in continuation of "Turkey No. 4 (1904)"). (May 4.)

Newfoundland. Report on the Foreign Trade and Commerce of Newfoundland. (May 4.)

Transvaal and Orange River Colony. Further correspondence relating to Affairs in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony (in continuation of [Cd. 2104]). (May 4.)

Post Office. Agreement between the Post Office of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office Department of the United States of America for the direct exchange of parcels by parcel post, dated 3rd February, 1905. (May 5.)

West Indies. Despatch to the Governors of the West Indian Colonies respecting the West Indian Mail Contract. (May 6.)

Boiler Explosions. Report to the Secretary of the Board of Trade upon the working of the Boiler Explosions Acts, 1882 and 1890; with appendices (in continuation [Cd. 1764.]). (May 6.)

Local Government Board (Scotland). Tenth Annual Report of the Local Government Board for Scotland, 1904. (May 6.)

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 1092

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RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND).—Return of evictions in Ireland for the quarter ended 31st March, 1905. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 1096

LUNACY.—Report to the Lord Chancellor of the number of visits made, the number of patients seen, and the number of miles travelled by the visitors of lunatics pursuant to the Lunacy Act, 1890, between 1st October, 1904, and 31st March, 1905 1096

BOARD OF EDUCATION (AMENDING ORDER No. 1).—Order amending Final Order No. 391 1096

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1889.—Annual Report on the state of the finances of the University of Glasgow under the provisions of Section 30 of the Universities (Scotland) Act, 1889, for the year 1903–1904 1096

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 TO 1903.—Hull (Channel Islands Animals) Landing Place Order of 1905 1197

POST OFFICE.—Statutory Rules and Orders, 1904—

No. 1746. The Inland Post Amendment (No. 1) Warrant.

Statutory Rules and Orders, 1905—

No. 56. The Foreign and Colonial Post Amendment (No. 9) Warrant.

No. 446. The Postal Order (Inland) Amendment (No. 2) Regulations.

No. 410. The Foreign and Colonial Post Amendment (No. 10) Warrant 1097

CERTIFIED INEBRIATE REFORMATORIES (REGULATIONS FOR MANAGEMENT).—Regulations made with the approval of the Secretary of State for the Home Department for the management and discipline of the certified inebriates reformatory at Cattal, near York 1097

PUBLIC RECORDS (FINES AND RECOVERIES).—Schedule containing a list and particulars of classes of documents connected with the alienation of land by means of fines and recoveries which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office 1097

IRISH LAND ACT, 1903.—Treasury rules and regulations, dated 14th April, 1905, under the Irish Land Act, 1903 1097

METROPOLITAN POLICE (ACCOUNTS).—Accounts showing the sums received and expended for the purposes of the Metropolitan Police and Police Pension Funds between the 1st April, 1904, and the 31st March, 1905 1097

PHARMACY (IRELAND) ACTS, 1875 TO 1890.—Order in Council, dated 22nd April, 1905, approving of regulations made by the Pharmaceutical Society 1097

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS, 1853 TO 1891 (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).—Licence granted by His Majesty to Harry Tate, under the provisions of the Penal Servitude Acts, 1853 to 1901, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864 1097

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POLLING DISTRICTS (BOROUGH OF HUDDERSFIELD).—Order made by the Council of the borough of Huddersfield re-dividing the Lockwood Ward of the borough into polling districts 1098

LIGHTHOUSES, ETC. (LOCAL INSPECTION).—Reports to the Board of Trade by the Trinity House of Deptford Strond, the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses, and the Commissioners of Irish Lights, of their inspection of local lighthouses, buoys, and beacons (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 176, of Session 1904).

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table .. 1098

UNION OF BENEFICES (METROPOLIS) ACT, 1860.—Scheme for effecting an union of the Benefices of St. Paul's, Covent Garden, and of St. Michael's, Burleigh Street, in the city of Westminster, and for effecting certain other measures incidental to or arising out of such union. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. (No. 58.) 1098

THAMES CONSERVANCY.—General Report of the proceedings of the Conservators of the river Thames during the year ended 31st December, 1904, with a statement of the accounts of the Conservators for that year. Delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1098

HARBOUR, ETC., BILLS.—Return respecting, laid before the House (pursuant to Order of this day) and to be printed. (No. 59.) 1098

NEW BILLS.

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 1.) Bill [H.L.] (No. 60).—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861, relating to Craster, Tralee, and Tenit; and Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill [H.L.] (No. 61).—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861, relating to Melfort and Portencross.

Were presented by the Lord Privy Seal (*M. Salisbury*); read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners 1098

Naval and Military Medals Bill [H.L.].—A Bill to regulate and restrict the wearing of naval and military medals and decorations. Was presented by the Viscount Hutchinson (*E. Donoughmore*); read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 62.) 1099

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill.—Read 2ª (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow 1099

House adjourned at half-past Four o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 8TH MAY, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

Mr. Speaker's Absence and the Absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means.—The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to continued indisposition, and of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means, owing to indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. Jeffreys, the Deputy-Chairman, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Private Bills (Standing Orders Applicable Thereto Complied With).—Mr. Deputy-Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—London County Council (Money) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 1100

Private Bills [Lords] (Standing Orders not Previously Inquired into Complied with).—Mr. Deputy-Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 1100

Provisional Order Bills (Standing Orders Applicable Thereto Complied with).—Mr. Deputy-Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time to-morrow 1100

Private Bills (Petition for Additional Provision) (Standing Orders not Complied with).—Mr. Deputy-Speaker laid upon the Table Reports from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for additional Provision in the following Bills, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.:—London County Council (General Powers) Bill; London County Council (Tramways) Bill; Wigan Corporation Bill.

Ordered, That the Reports be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 1100

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Heckmondwike Improvement Bill.—Read the third time and passed .. 1101

Marylebone Chapels Bill [Lords].—Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment 1101

South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Company Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 1101

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 1101

Charing Cross, Euston and Hampstead Railway Bill.—As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time 1101

Edgware and Hampstead Railway Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 1101

West Cumberland Electric Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords].—Considered, to be read the third time 1101

Grangemouth Waterworks and Burgh Extension Order Confirmation Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 1101

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 1101

Mullingar, Kells and Drogheda Railway Bill.—Order for Second Reading upon Thursday, May 11th, read, and discharged; Bill withdrawn .. 1101

Private Bills (Group H).—Ordered, That Samuel Rideal and John Clough Thresh do attend the Committee on Group H of Private Bills on Thursday next, at Twelve of the clock 1102

Police and Sanitary Committee.—Ordered, That Dr. William Collingridge do attend the Police and Sanitary Committee To-morrow, at half-past Eleven of the clock 1102

PETITIONS.

Education (Scotland) Bill.—Petition from Fearn, for alteration; to lie upon the Table 1102

Education (Scotland) Bill.—Petition from Lesmahagow, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1102

Franchise and Removal of Women's Disabilities Bill.—Two Petitions from West Bristol, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1102

Juvenile Smoking Bill.—Petition from Leith, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1103

Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill.—Petition from Kirriemuir, against; to lie upon the Table 1103

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Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill.—Petitions in favour; from Broughty Ferry; Cockburnspath; Coldstream; Dundee; Eastwood; Edinburgh; Glasgow (two); Govan; Hillhead and Kelvinside; Kelso Abbey; Kiloyth (two); Kinning Park; Kirkcaldy; Larbert; Leith; Lesmahagow; Maryhill; Paisley; Portobello; Reston; and Scour: to lie upon the Table 1103

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill.—Petition from Margate, against; to lie upon the Table 1103

Milk Depots (London) Bill.—Petition from Lewisham, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1103

Women's Enfranchisement Bill.—Petition from North Manchester, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1103

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Local Taxation (Grants in Aid).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 10th April; *Mr. Black*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 153.] 1103

Evictions (Ireland).—Copy presented, of Return of the number of Evictions in Ireland for the quarter ended 31st March, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1103

Diseases of Animals Acts, 1894 to 1903.—Copy presented, of the Hull (Channel Islands Animals) Landing Place Order of 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1104

Naval Expenditure (Great Britain and Foreign Countries).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 4th May; *Sir Edgar Vincent*]; to lie upon the Table 1104

Paper Laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House.—Union of Benefices Act (Saint Paul, Covent Garden, with Saint Michael, Burleigh Street). Copy of Scheme under The Union of Benefices Act, 1860, for effecting an Union of the Benefices of Saint Paul, Covent Garden, with Saint Michael, Burleigh Street [by Act] 1104

Corporal Punishment.—Address for "Return of all sentences of Corporal Punishment inflicted under 26 and 27 Vic., c. 44, upon persons convicted of offences under Section 43 of The Larceny Act, 1861, and Section 21 of The Offences Against the Person Act, 1861, in England and Wales, from the 31st day of December, 1903, to the 31st day of December, 1904 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 288, of Session 1904)."—(*Mr. Lloyd Morgan.*) 1104

Sugar and Sugared Goods (Import Duties) Foreign (Countries).—Return ordered, "showing the amount of the Import Duties imposed on Sugar and on confectionery, jams, biscuits, cakes, and other sugared goods in Germany, Austria, Hungary, Belgium, Holland, France, and Switzerland; and also a Return of the drawbacks granted on exports in these countries on all these commodities."—(*Mr. Lough.*) 1104

SMALLPOX.—Return ordered ' showing as regards each Port or other Sanitary District in England and Wales (exclusive of any district wholly or partly in London), in respect of which during the year ended the 25th day of March, 1905, cases of Smallpox have been reported to the Local Government Board; the number of such cases; and also, where the number reported has exceeded 100, the estimated amount of the expenditure incurred by the Sanitary Authority in consequence of the occurrence of such cases."—(*Sir John Tuke.*) 1104

EAST INDIA (FINANCIAL STATEMENT).—Address for "Copy of the Indian Financial Statement for 1905–6 and of the Proceedings of the Legislative Council of the Governor-General thereon."—(*Sir Henry Fowler.*) — .. 1105

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

IRISH ESTATES COMMISSIONERS—LEGAL ADVICE BY LAW OFFICERS OF THE CROWN.—Question, Mr. T. W. Russell (Tyrone, S.); Answer, Mr. Atkinson 1105

NAVY—TRAINING OF ENGINEER OFFICERS—AGE REGULATIONS.—Question, Sir Gilbert Parker (Gravesend); Answer, Mr. Pretyman.. 1105

NEW CONSTRUCTION IN BRITISH AND FOREIGN NAVIES.—Question, Mr. Partington (Derbyshire, High Peak); Answer, Mr. Pretyman 1106

IRISH BOARD OF AGRICULTURE—LOCAL BODIES AND STAFF GRIEVANCES.—Question, Mr. O'Kelly (Mayo, N.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1106

UNCERTIFIED DEATHS IN SCOTLAND AND IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 1107

FINES FOR ILLEGAL TRAWLING.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 1107

SELECTIONS OF JUSTICES OF THE PEACE TO THE LICENSING COURT IN SCOTLAND.—Question, Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson .. 1108

POOR LAW MEDICAL RELIEF—RECOMMENDATIONS OF DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE.—Question, Mr. Munro Ferguson (Leith Burghs); Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 1108

LEARNERS IN DUNDEE TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT.—Question, Mr. J. F. Hope (Sheffield, Brightside); Answer, Lord Stanley 1108

WEST INDIAN MAIL CONTRACT.—Question, Mr. Lawrence (Liverpool, Abercromby); Answer, Lord Stanley 1109

APPEAL OF TELEGRAPHIST FOX OF PORTADOWN.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Lord Stanley 1110

REMUNERATION OF IRISH AND SCOTCH LAW OFFICERS OF THE CROWN.—Question, Mr. Whitley (Halifax); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 1110

PARTICULARS OF FEES OF LAW OFFICERS OF THE CROWN.—Question, Mr Whitley; Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 1111

REMUNERATION OF LAW OFFICERS OF THE CROWN.—Question, Mr. Lambert; Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 1112

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DUTIES AND SITTINGS OF THE RAILWAY AND CANAL COMMISSIONERS.—Question, Mr. Lambert; Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 1113

REMOVAL OF WREATH FROM STATUE OF EARL OF BEACONSFIELD.—Question, Dr Shipman; Answer, Lord Balcarres 1114

H.M.S. "ORION" AT MALTA.—Question, Mr. Kearley (Devonport); Answer, Mr. Pretyman 1114

MOTOR SPEED LIMIT IN THE METROPOLITAN AREA.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland); Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas 1115

DAMAGE TO ROADS, ETC., IN LONDON BY HEAVY MOTOR TRAFFIC.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason; Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1115

APPOINTMENT OF SAMUEL BRATTON AS CLERK TO KILDARE PETTY SESSIONS—PRODUCTION OF BIRTH CERTIFICATE.—Question, Mr. John O'Connor (Kildare, N.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1116

REPORT OF IRISH ESTATES COMMISSIONERS.—Question, Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1116

IRISH EDUCATION—RULE 127 (*b*).—Question, Mr. Dillon; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1117

DISPOSAL OF SITE OF DUKE OF YORK'S SCHOOL AT CHELSEA.—Question, Mr. Whitmore (Chelsea); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1118

ARMY EXPENDITURE OF GREAT BRITAIN, INDIA, FRANCE, GERMANY, RUSSIA AND JAPAN.—Question, Sir Edgar Vincent (Exeter); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1118

POSITION OF MILITARY ACCOUNTANTS IN THE ARMY PAY DEPARTMENT.—Question, Captain Norton 1121

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

NAVAL ASSISTANCE AT IRISH EVICTIONS.—Questions, Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.) and Captain Donelan (Cork, E.); Answers, Mr. Pretyman 1122

FLOGGING IN THE NAVY.—Questions, Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answer, Mr. Pretyman 1123

COST OF RIFLE SIGHTS.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin (Galway); Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) 1123

ARMY FINANCE—PAYMENT OF TROOPS IN IRELAND.—Question, Captain Donelan; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1124

JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS IN THE COLONIES.—Question, Mr. Hemphill (Tyrone, N.); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington) 1124

POWERS OF THE TRANSVAAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.—Question, Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1225

LORD KITCHENER.—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) 1125

LORD CURZON'S POLICY.—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1126

INDIAN PLAGUE—COST, ETC., OF SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION.—Question, Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.); Answer, Mr. Brodrick.. 1126

INDIAN CONGESTED DISTRICTS AND THE PLAGUE.—Question, Mr. Herbert Roberts; Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1126

REDEMPTION OF ANNUITIES.—Question, Mr. Marks (Kent, Thanet); Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Austin Chamberlain (Worcestershire, E.) 1127

GENERAL MEDICAL COUNCIL.—Question, Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid.); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's).. 1127

ALIENS BILL—COST OF ADMINISTRATION.—Questions, Mr. Bright (Shropshire, Oswestry) and Mr. Lough (Islington, W.); Answers, Mr. Akers-Douglas .. 1128

VAGRANCY CONVICTIONS.—Question, Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas.. 1128

IDENTIFICATION OF MOTOR-CARS AT NIGHT.—Question, Mr. Caldwell; Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas.. 1129

THE MARKYATE MOTOR-CAR ACCIDENT.—Questions, Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answers Mr. Akers-Douglas.. 1129

INSPECTION OF LAUNDRIES.—Questions, Mr. T. L. Corbett (Down, N.), Mr. W. Moore and Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answers, Mr. Akers-Douglas 1129

WEST INDIAN MAIL SERVICE.—Questions, Master of Elibank (Edinburgh, Midlothian), Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) and Mr. Bright; Answers, The Postmaster-General, (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhaughton) 1130

SPLIT DUTIES IN THE POST OFFICE.—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answer, Lord Stanley 1131

PASSENGER TRAFFIC BETWEEN HARWICH AND THE HOOK OF HOLLAND.—Questions, Sir General Flower (Bradford, W.) and Mr. Claude Hay (Shoreditch, Hoxton); Answers, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Bonar Law, Glasgow, Blackfriars) 1132

TAFF VALE RAILWAY ACCIDENT.—Question, Mr. Bell (Derby); Answer, Mr. Bonar Law 1132

BURNLEY BANK TOP ACCIDENT.—Question, Mr. Bell; Answer, Mr. Bonar Law 1133

JOINT STOCK COMPANIES AND THE WEST AUSTRALIAN GOLD-MINING INDUSTRY.—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answer, Mr. Bonar Law 1133

ILLEGAL TRAWLING OFF THE SUNDERLAND COAST.—Questions, Mr. Leveson-Gower (Sunderland) and Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland); Answers, The Lord-Advocate (Mr. Scott Dickson, Glasgow, Bridgton) .. 1134

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ANTRIM CROWN SOLICITOR AND SESSIONAL CROWN SOLICITOR OF BELFAST.—Questions, Mr. Joseph Devlin (Kilkenny, N.) and Mr. Sloan; Answers, The Attorney-General for Ireland (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.) 1135

CHARGES AGAINST SERGEANT MAJOR MURPHY, CONNAUGHT RANGERS.—Questions, Mr. Hayden (Roscommon, S.); Answers, Mr. Atkinson 1135

THE DURSEY ISLAND EVICTION.—Questions, Mr. Gilhooly (Cork County, W.) and Captain Donelan; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.) 1136

IRISH DRAINAGE AUTHORITIES.—Question, Mr. John O'Connor (Kildare, N.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1137

IRISH DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE—STAFF GRIEVANCES.—Question, Mr. O'Kelly (Mayo, N.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1137

SMALLPOX AT MULLINGAR AND ATHLONE.—Questions, Mr. Hayden; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1138

SMALLPOX AND ISOLATION.—Question, Mr. Hayden; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1138

IRISH LAND PURCHASE AGREEMENT.—Question, Mr. Joseph Devlin; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1139

GREENCASTLE RATEPAYERS AND THE BELFAST CORPORATION.—Question, Mr. Joseph Devlin; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1140

ORANGE BAND AT PORTADOWN—VISIT TO THE CATHOLIC QUARTER.—Questions, Mr. Joseph Devlin, Mr. Charles Craig (Antrim, S.), Mr. William Moore, Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.), Mr. Lonsdale, and Mr. John O'Connor; Answers, Mr. Walter Long 1142

SIR ANTONY MACDONNELL.—Questions, Mr. William Moore; Answers, Mr. Walter Long 1143

THE CHIEF SECRETARY AND THE BELFAST ORANGEMEN.—Question, Mr. Joseph Devlin; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1145

CONGESTED DISTRICTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Question, Mr. Caldwell; Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 1145

PUNISHMENT FOR RECKLESS MOTOR-CAR DRIVING.—Questions, Mr. Swift MacNeill and Captain Donelan; Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1145

MINISTERS AND DIRECTORSHIPS.—Questions, Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1146

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Questions, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Crooks (Woolwich), Mr. Bell, Mr. Gibson-Bowles, Mr. Lough; Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1146

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SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure: Mr. Morrison; and had appointed in substitution: Sir James Heath.

Report to lie upon the Table 1148

Trades Unions and Trade Disputes Bill.—

Reported, with Amendments, from the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 154.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 154.]

Bill, as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 205.] 1148

Education (Scotland) Bill—[SECOND READING].—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Arthur Henderson (Durham, Barnard Castle) 1148
Sir Hugh Shaw Stewart (Renfrew, E.) 1155
Mr. Charles Douglas (Lanarkshire, N.W.) 1158
Sir John Gorst (Cambridge University) 1162
Mr. Edwards (Radnor) 1164
Sir Andrew Agnew (Edinburgh, S.) 1166
Mr. Crombie (Kincardineshire) 1168
Sir Lewis McIver (Edinburgh, W.) 1169
Mr. Munro Ferguson (Leith Burghs) 1170
Sir Mark Stewart (Kirkcudbrightshire) 1175
Mr. Haldane (Haddingtonshire) 1177
Sir J. Stirling-Maxwell (Glasgow, College) 1183
Mr. Thomas Shaw (Hawick Burghs) 1184
Mr. Parker Smith (Lanarhire, Partick) 1191
Dr. Macnamara (Camberwell, N.) 1193
Sir Walter Thorburn (Peebles and Selkirk) 1205
Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.) 1208
The Earl of Dalkeith (Roxburgh) 1211
Captain Ellice (St. Andrews Burghs) 1213

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL. [SECOND READING].—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [8th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Captain Ellice 1214
Sir Charles Renshaw (Renfrewshire, W.) 1217

Mr. Wallace (Perth) 1225
The Lord Advocate (Mr. Scott Dickson, Glasgow, Blackfriars) 1228
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) 1237
Mr. Caldwell (Lancashire, Mid) 1238

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

ADJOURNMENT.—Motion made, and Question proposed "That this House do now adjourn."

Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs) 1258
Mr. Black (Banffshire) 1259
Mr. Joseph Devlin (Kilkenny, N.) 1260
Sir A. Acland Hood 1261
Mr. Whitley (Halifax) 1261
Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.) 1262
Mr. Mooney (Dublin County, S.) 1262

Attention called to the fact that 40 Members were not present. House counted and 40 Members not being present, the House was adjourned at half after Twelve of the clock till To-morrow.

HOUSE OF LORDS: TUESDAY, 9TH MAY, 1905.

INTRODUCED.—Francis, Lord Bishop of Oxford, was (in the usual manner) introduced 1265

SAT FIRST.—The Lord Kenmare (*E. Kenmare*) sat first in Parliament after the death of his father 1265

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Gamble's Divorce Bill [H.L.].—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read. Counsel called in. Witnesses examined. Moved, that the Bill be now read 2^a. The same was agreed to. Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next 1265

Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [H.L.].—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read. Counsel called in. Moved, that the Bill be now read 2^a. The same was agreed to. Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next 1265

Lautour's Divorce Bill [H.L.].—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read. Counsel called in. Witnesses examined. Moved, that the Bill be now read 2^a. The same was agreed to. Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next 1265

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—North Sussex Gas ; Woolwich Borough Council 1265

And also the Certificates that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with; Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 1) [H.L.]; Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 1) [H.L.]; Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 2) [H.L.].

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 1265

Alexandra Park and Palace Bill [H.L.].—Reported, with Amendments .. 1266

Hythe Corporation Bill [H.L.].—The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 21st of February and the 31st of March last discharged, and Bill committed 1266

Accrington Corporation Bill.—Read 2ª, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 1266

Donovan's Divorce Bill [H.L.].—A witness ordered to attend on the Second Reading of the Bill 1266

Metropolitan Electric Supply Company (Acton District) Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 27th of February and 9th of March last, discharged, and Bill committed .. 1266

Grangemouth Waterworks and Burgh Extension Order Confirmation Bill.—Brought from the Commons 1266

Heckmondwike Improvement Bill.—South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Company Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners 1266

Marylebone Chapels Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to .. 1266

Bangor (County Down) Water and Improvement Bill [H.L.].—Matlock Bath Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]; Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Formby Township Bill [H.L.]; Humber Conservancy Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord O'Hagan be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Chelmsford; read, and agreed to 126

Grangemouth Waterworks and Burgh Extension Order Confirmation Bill.—Read 1ª; to be printed; and (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899), deemed to have been read 2ª (The Lord Kintore (*E. Kintore*)), and reported from the Committee. (No. 63) 1267

Electrical Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill [H.L.] (No. 64).—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, the Electric Lighting (Scotland) Act, 1890, and the Electric Lighting (Scotland) Act, 1902, relating to Airdrie, Coatbridge, and Cults and District 1267

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Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill [H.L.] (No. 65).—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Brentford, Croydon (Rural), Durham (Districts), Eastbourne (Willingdon Extension), Gravesend (Extension to Northfleet), Kingsbury, Old Windsor, and Wimborne and District 1267

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.] (No. 66).—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Tramways, Act, 1870, relating to Bradford Corporation Tramways, Gorton Urban District Council Tramways, Keighley Corporation Tramways, Leeds Corporation Tramways, Liverpool Corporation Tramways Extensions, and Pudsey Corporation Tramways 1267

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2 Bill) [H.L.] (No. 67).—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Tramways Act, 1870, relating to Aberavon Tramways, Colchester Corporation Tramways, King's Norton and Northfield Urban District Council Tramway, Luton Corporation Tramways, Portobello and Musselburgh Tramways (Amendment), and Southampton Corporation Tramways 1267

Gas Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.] (No. 68).—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Aberystwyth Gas, Haslemere Gas, Hayling Island Gas, Sandiacre Gas, and Stanford-le-Hope Gas, and

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill[H.L.] (No. 69).—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Dorking Water, Maidenhead Water, Tavistock Gas, Wey Valley Water, and Ystalyfera Gas.

Were presented by the Lord Privy Seal (*M. Salisbury*); read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners.

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill.—House in Committee (according to order); Bill reported without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Thursday next.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 3365. United States (Hawaii);

No. 3366. Russia (Batoum).

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

FRENCH NEUTRALITY IN THE FAR EAST.

Earl Spencer 1268
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) 1268

Workmen's Compensation Bill [H.L.].

House in Committee (according to Order).

[The Earl of ONSLOW in the Chair.]

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to.

Clause 3—

Lord Newton 1270

Amendment moved—

> "In Clause 3, page 2, line 35, after the word 'be' to insert the words 'commenced until after the expiration of twenty-eight days from the date when the notice of accident has been given and shall not be.'" —(*Lord Newton.*)

Lord Belper 1270
Lord Davey 1271

Amendment, by leave of the Committee, withdrawn.

The Marquess of Ripon 1271
Lord Davey 1272

Amendment moved—

> "In Clause 3, page 2, line 38, to leave out the word 'six' and insert the word 'fourteen.'"—(*Lord Davey.*)

Lord Belper 1272
The Marquess of Ripon 1273
Earl Spencer 1274
Lord James of Hereford 1274
Lord Belper 1275
Lord Heneage 1275
The Lord Chancellor 1275
Lord Davey 1276
The Earl of Jersey 1276
Lord Alverstone 1277

On Question, "That the word 'six' stand part of the clause," their Lordships divided :—Contents, 56 ; Not-Contents, 18.

Lord Newton 1278

Amendment moved—

> "In Clause 3, page 2, line 40, to leave out the words 'three months' and insert the words 'six weeks.'"—(*Lord Newton.*)

Lord Belper 1279

Amendment, by leave of the Committee, withdrawn.

Clause 3 agreed to.

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Clause 4—

Lord Davey 1279

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 4, page 3, line 39, to leave out Sub-section (3)."—(*Lord Davey.*)

Lord Belper 1280
Lord Davey 1281
The Lord Chancellor 1282

Amendment, by leave of the Committee, withdrawn.

Lord Davey 1283

Amendment moved—

"To insert the following new sub-section: 'In the principal Act, Section 4, the words "is merely ancillary or incidental to and" are hereby repealed.'"—(*Lord Davey.*)

The Lord Chancellor 1283

Amendment, by leave of the Committee, withdrawn.

Clauses 4, 5 and 6 agreed to.

Lord Newton 1284

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 6A, page 4, line 23, after the word 'any' to insert the word 'foreign.'"—(*Lord Newton.*)

Amendment withdrawn.

Clause 7.

Lord Davey 1284

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 7, page 4, line 40, to leave out the words 'by the undertakers.'"—(*Lord Davey.*)

Lord Belper 1286
Lord Davey 1286
Lord Alverstone 1286

Amendment, by leave of the Committee withdrawn.

Lord Tweedmouth 1287

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 7, page 4, line 43, after the words 'engineering work' to insert the words 'shoeing forge.'"—(*Lord Tweedmouth.*)

Lord Belper 1287

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

The Earl of Wemyss 1288
Lord Davey 1289

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 7, page 5, line 18, after the word 'locomotives' to insert the words 'for the purpose of any trade or business, or in agriculture.'"—(*Lord Davey.*)

Lord Belper 1289
Lord Davey 1289

Amendment, by leave of the Committee, withdrawn.

Lord Davey 1290

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 7, page 5, line 22, to leave out the second word 'and'; and in line 23, after the word 'siding' to insert the words 'or other building or work.'"—(*Lord Davey.*)

Lord Belper 1290

Amendment, by leave of the Committee, withdrawn.

Lord Newton 1290

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 7, page 6, lines 18 and 19, to leave out the words 'owner or lessee of or,' and after the word 'person' in line 19 to insert the words 'having the actual use or occupation or.'"—(*Lord Newton.*)

Lord Belper 1291

Amendment, by leave of the Committee, withdrawn.

Clause 7, as amended, agreed to.

Lord Newton 1291

Amendment moved—

"After Clause 7 to insert the following new clause: 'In Paragraph (1) (*a*) (i) of the First Schedule after the words 'equal to his' to insert the word 'net,' after the words 'amount of his' to insert the word 'net,' and after the words 'average weekly' to insert the word 'net,' and in Paragraph (1) (*b*) of the First Schedule after the words 'average weekly' to insert the word 'net."—(*Lord Newton.*)

The Lord Chancellor 1292

Amendment, by leave of the Committee, withdrawn.

Clauses 8 and 9 agreed to.

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Clause 10.

Lord Davey 1293

Amendment moved——

"In Clause 10, page 9, line 21, to leave out the word 'suitable' and to insert the word 'other.'"—(*Lord Davey.*)

Lord Belper 1293

Amendment, by leave of the Committee, withdrawn.

Clause 10 agreed to.

Clauses 11 to 16 agreed to.

Lord Davey 1294

Amendment moved—

"In the Second Schedule to the principal Act, Sub-section (2), after the first word 'Judge' to insert the words 'or by a single arbitrator appointed by him,' and to repeal the words from 'rules of Court' to the end of the sub-section."—(*Lord Davey.*)

Amendment, by leave of the Committee, withdrawn.

Lord Davey 1294

Amendment moved—

"In Sub-section (7) to leave out the words 'a Judge of the High Court at Chambers' and insert the words 'the County Court Judge.'" —(*Lord Davey.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clauses 17 to 21 agreed to.

Clause 22.

Lord James of Hereford 1295
The Lord Chancellor 1296

Clause 22 agreed to.

Bill re-committed to the Standing Committee; and to be printed as amended. (No. 70.)

CRIMINAL CASES (RESERVATION OF POINTS OF LAW) BILL [H.L.]. [SECOND READING].—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

The Lord Chancellor 1297

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Bill read 2^a, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.

THE NATIVES OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA.—

The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury 1298
Viscount Knutsford 1307
Lord Tennyson 1310
Earl Carrington 1311
The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (*The Duke of Marlborough*) 1311
The Marquess of Ripon 1317
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) 1319
Earl Spencer 1321

House adjourned at Eight o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 9TH MAY, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE AND THE ABSENCE OF THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of MR. SPEAKER and of the CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JEFFREYS, the Deputy-Chairman, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order 1322

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, originating in the Lords, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.:—Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water Company Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 1322

Hessle Gas Bill [LORDS].—Holy Trinity, Portsea, Bill [Lords]. As amended, considered; to be read the third time 1322

Clyde Navigation (Reconstitution) Bill [LORDS].—Read a second time, committed. 1322

Electric Lighting Provisional (Order No. 3) Bill.—Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill. Read a second time, and commited 1322

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to Kilrush (Rural), Londonderry, and New Ross," presented by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland; supported by Mr. Walter Long; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 206] 1323

Ulster and Connaught Light Railways Bill.—Petition for additional Provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 1323

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Southampton and Winchester Great Western Junction Railway (Abandonment) Bill, without Amendment.

Brompton, Chatham, Gillingham, and Rochester Water Bill, with Amendments.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the construction of new railways and works and the acquisition of lands by the Great Central Railway Company in connection with their undertaking; the acquisition of additional lands and the execution of works by the Cheshire Lines Committee and the Manchester, South Junction, and Altrincham Railway Company respectively in connection with their respective undertakings; the acquisition by the Great Central Railway Company of the undertakings of the Wigan Junction Railways Company and the Liverpool, St. Helen's, and South Lancashire Railway Company; the incorporation of a Joint Committee of the Great Central and London and North Western Railway Companies; and for other purposes." [Great Central Railway Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to extend the time limited for the construction of works authorised by the Dearne Valley Railway Act, 1897; to authorise alterations in such works; to confer further powers upon the Dearne Valley Railway Company; and for other purposes." [Dearne Valley Railway Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to dissolve the University College of Sheffield; and to transfer all the property and liabilities of the University College of Sheffield to the University of Sheffield; and for other purposes." [Sheffield University Bill [Lords.] 1323

Great Central Railway Bill [LORDS].—Dearne Valley Railway Bill [Lords]; Sheffield University Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 1324

PETITIONS.

FRANCHISE AND REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.—Petitions in favour; from East Bristol; and Horfield and Bishopston; to lie upon the Table .. 1324

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Glasgow (three); Lanark; Perth; and Saltcoats; to lie upon the Table 1324

LOCAL TAXATION.—Petition from Whitehaven, for legislation; to lie upon the Table 1324

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.—Petition from Hastings, against; to lie upon the Table 1324

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS (SUNDAY) BILL.—Petition from Birmingham, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1324

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WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Glasgow; Huddersfield (two); and Scottish Women's Liberal Federation; to lie upon the Table 1324

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NAVAL EXPENDITURE (GREAT BRITAIN AND FOREIGN COUNTRIES).—Return [presented 8th May]; to be printed. [No. 155.] 1324

ULTIMUS HÆRES (SCOTLAND) (ACCOUNT AND LIST OF ESTATES).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 3rd May; *Mr. Victor Cavendish*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 156.] 1325

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3365 and 3366 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.. 1325

TAMIL CHILDREN (EDUCATION).—Copy presented, of Papers relating to the Education of immigrant Tamil Coolie Children employed on Estates in Ceylon [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1325

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

IRISH EDUCATION—INFRINGEMENT OF RULE 127 (*b*) AT NEWMARKET, COUNTY CORK.—Question, Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long.. .. 1325

CLUBS REGISTERED DURING JANUARY 1905, UNDER THE LICENSING ACT.—Question, Mr. Nolan (Louth, S.); Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas 1326

COUNTY LICENSING COMMITTEES.—Question, Mr. Helme (Lancashire, Lancaster): Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas 1326

ROAD ACCIDENTS RETURNS—DISTINCTION BETWEEN ACCIDENTS CAUSED BY MOTOR-PROPELLED AND HORSE-DRAWN VEHICLES.—Question, Mr. Brooke Robinson (Dudley); Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas 1327

REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR THE PARISH OF UIG, ISLAND OF LEWIS.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 1327

SUMS PAID TO HIGHLAND CROFTING COUNTIES OUT OF THE EQUIVALENT GRANT—REDUCTION UNDER THE EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 1328

SUGGESTED EXTENSION OF THE BENEFITS OF THE CROFTER'S ACT, 1886, TO SMALL LEASEHOLDERS.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 1329

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL—MEETING PLACES OF PROVINCIAL COUNCILS.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 1329

SOUTHPORT TELEGRAPH OFFICE.—Question, Mr. Marshall Hall (Lancashire, Southport); Answer, Lord Stanley 1329

POSTAGE ON ROSS AND CROMARTY RATE DEMAND NOTES.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord Stanley 1330

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SPEED OF MOTOR-CARS.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1331

LINCOLN TYPHOID FEVER OUTBREAK SUGGESTED OFFICIAL INQUIRY.—Question, Mr. Jacoby (Derbyshire, Mid.); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1331

APPOINTMENT OF ASSISTANT ENGINEERS IN THE INDIAN PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.—Question, Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1331

ILLEGAL TRAWLING OFF THE IRISH COASTS.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1332

TRAWLING OFF THE IRISH COAST—SIZE OF MESHES OF TRAWL NETS.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1332

DECAY OF IRISH FISHERY INDUSTRY.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1333

IRISH FISHERIES—DEEP-SEA AND INSHORE FISHING.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1333

REBUILDING OF GUY'S SCHOOL, BALLYMENA.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1334

GRANT TO CLONCORE SCHOOL.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1334

GUY'S FREE SCHOOLS, BALLYMENA.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1335

COOLIE EDUCATION IN CEYLON—PUBLICATION OF PAPERS.—Questions, Mr. Stanley Wilson (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness); Answers, Mr. Lyttelton .. 1335

ARMY GYMNASIA.—Question, Sir Thomas Dewar (Tower Hamlets, St. George's); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1337

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

THE BLACK WATCH—PLACE OF TRAINING.—Question, Mr. McCrae (Edinburgh, E.); Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) 1337

CADET CORPS.—Question, Major Seely; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1338

MILITARY SERVICE IN NIGERIA.—Question, Mr. Ainsworth (Argyllshire); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1338

THE COLONIAL CONFERENCE.—Question, Mr. Runciman (Dewsbury); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington) 1338

ESTABLISHMENT OF A MARINE POST OFFICE ON ATLANTIC LINERS.—Questions, Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny), Mr. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green) and Captain Donelan; Answers, The Postmaster-General (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton) 1339

Members' Correspondence.—Question, Mr. Brigg (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley); Answer, Lord Stanley 1340

Vagrancy Convictions in Manchester.—Question, Mr. Tomlinson (Cheshire, Crewe); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department 1340

Underfed School Children—Liability of London Boards of Guardians.—Questions, Dr. Macnamara; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 1341

Parents of Underfed Children—Electoral Disqualification.—Questions, Dr. Macnamara, Mr. Arthur Henderson (Durham, Barnard Castle) and Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil) 1341

Tuberculosis Commission.—Question, Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1342

Agricultural Rating Act—Clerical Incomes from Corn Rents.—Question, Mr. Malcolm (Suffolk, Stowmarket); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour .. 1343

Smallpox on Vessels—Quarantine Regulations.—Questions, Mr. Hayden (Roscommon, S.) and Mr. Scott Montagu (Hampshire, New Forest); Answers, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1343

City of Winchester Motor-Car Regulations.—Questions, Mr. Cawley (Lancashire, Prestwich) and Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland); Answers, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1344

The Valuation Bill.—Question, Mr. Benn (Devonport); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1345

Consolidation of the Poor Law.—Questions, Mr. Keir Hardie; Answers, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1346

Sheep Scab in the Orkneys.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason; Answer, The President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes, Huntingdonshire, Ramsey) 1347

Thames Barrage Scheme.—Questions, Sir Charles Cayzer (Barrow-in-Furness); Answers, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Bonar Law, Glasgow, Blackfriars) 1347

Lightships and Wireless Telegraphy.—Question, Major Seely; Answer, Mr. Bonar Law 1348

Foreign Prison-made Goods.—Question, Mr. Lambert (Devonshire, South Molton); Answer, The Financial Secretary of The Treasury (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.) 1348

Government Redistribution Proposals.—Question, Mr. Lambert; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1351

French Neutrality in the Far East.—Question, Mr. Joseph Walton (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1351

Mr. Chamberlain's Room in the House of Commons.—Questions, Mr. Whitley (Halifax); Answers, Lord Balcarres (Lancashire, Chorley) 1349

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SHREWSBURY EDUCATION COMMITTEE.—Questions, Mr. Bright (Shropshire, Oswestry) and Sir John Gorst (Cambridge University); Answers, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education (Sir William Anson, Oxford University) 1349

SANITARY ACCOMMODATION IN SCOTTISH SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. Scott Dickson, Glasgow, Bridgton) 1350

AGRICULTURAL RATING BILL—COMMITTEE STAGE.—Question, Mr. Lambert; Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J Balfour, Manchester, E.) 1350

MR. WYNDHAM'S RESIGNATION—PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Mr. Wyndham (*Dover*) 1352

NEW BILL.

Motor-Car (Alien Drivers) Licences Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to the grant of Licences to Alien Motor-Car Drivers," presented by Mr. Scott Montagu; supported by Mr. Arthur Stanley, Mr. Charles James Murray, Master of Elibank, Mr. Bright, Mr. Joseph Albert Pease, Mr. Norman, and Mr. David Morgan; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 17th May, and to be printed. [Bill 207] 1355

NEW MEMBER SWORN.—William O Brien, esquire, for the Borough of Cork .. 1355

GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND.

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (*Stirling Burghs*) 1355

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That in view of recent events in Ireland and the revelations which caused the resignation of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover, it is in the highest degree desirable, in the public interest, that the correspondence and other information necessary to enable the House of Commons and the country to form a judgment on the policy and proceedings of the Irish Government, connected with and subsequent to the appointment of Sir Antony MacDonnell, be communicated to Parliament."—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Mr. William O'Brien (*Cork*) 1371
Mr. William Moore (*Antrim, N.*) 1381
Mr. Robson (*South Shields*) 1395
Mr. Charles Craig (*Antrim, S.*) 1398
Mr. Joseph Devlin (*Kilkenny, N.*) 1407
Mr. Sloan (*Belfast, S.*) 1412
Mr. Lough (*Islington, W.*) 1417
Mr. T. L. Corbett (*Down, N.*) 1423

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

Government of Ireland.—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [9th May], "That, in view of recent events in Ireland, and the revelations which caused the resignation of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover, it is in the highest degree desirable, in the public interest, that the correspondence and other information necessary to enable the House of Commons and the country to form a judgment on the policy and proceedings of the Irish Government, connected with and subsequent to the appointment of Sir Antony MacDonnell, be communicated to Parliament."—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Question again proposed.

Mr. T. L. Corbett 1424
Mr. Dillon (*Mayo, N.*) 1426
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (*Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.*) 1438
Mr. Asquith (*Fifeshire, E.*) 1452

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 252 ; Noes, 315. (Division List No. 152.

Chartered Societies Bill—[Second Reading].—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Sir John Rolleston (*Leicester*) 1465
Mr. Harwood (*Bolton*) 1466

And, it being midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Wednesday, 7th June.

Adjournment.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

Mr. Dalziel (*Kirkcaldy Burghs*) 1466
Mr. McKenna (*Monmouthshire, N.*) 1467
Mr. Labouchere (*Northampton*) 1467

Question put, and agreed to.

NEW BILL.

Metropolitan Borough Council's Association.—Bill to remove doubts as to the legality of the payment of certain expenses by Councils of Metropolitan Boroughs, ordered to be brought in by Captain Jessel, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. W. F. D. Smith, Mr. Hayes Fisher, Dr. Macnamara, Mr. Buxton, Mr. Remnant, and Mr. Crooks.

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Metropolitan Borough Councils Association Bill.—' To remove doubts as to the legality of the payment of certain expenses by Councils of Metropolitan Boroughs," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 208] .. 1468

Adjourned at nine minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 10TH MAY, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock

MR SPEAKER'S ABSENCE

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr SPEAKER owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker pursuant to the Standing Order 1469

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 10) Bill.—" To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Abergavenny, Atherton, Keighley, Richmond (Surrey), and Whiston (Rural)," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 209] 1469

PETITIONS.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Brims; Edinburgh (two); Glasgow (five); North Walls; Paisley (three); Partick; Springburn; Whiteinch; and Zetland; to lie upon the Table .. 1469

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS (SUNDAY) BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Birmingham; and Probus; to lie upon the Table 1469

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Kirkintilloch; Oxford and Sheffield; Stockport; and West Renfrewshire; to lie upon the Table 1469

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877 (OXFORD).—Copy presented, of Statute made by the Governing Body of St. John's College, Oxford, on 20th January, 1905, amending Statutes III. and XVI. of the Statutes of the College [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 157] 1470

NATIONAL DEBT.—Copy presented, of Return showing (1) the Aggregate Gross Liabilities of the State as represented by the Nominal Funded Debt, Estimated Capital Liability in respect of Terminable Annuities, Unfunded Debt, and other Liabilities in respect of Debt, the Estimated Assets, and the Exchequer balances at the close of each financial year from 1835–6 to 1904–5, both inclusive; and (2) the Gross and Net Expenditure charged annually during that period against the Public Revenue on account of the National Debt and other Payments connected with Capital Liabilities (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper [C. 2065] of Session 1904) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1470

SUPERANNUATION ACTS 1859 AND 1876.—Copy presented of Treasury Minute, dated 4th May, 1905, declaring Yunnan-fu and Tengyueh to be unhealthy places within the meaning of The Superannuation Act, 1876 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1470

RAILWAY RETURNS (PRELIMINARY STATEMENT).—Copy presented, of Return relating to the Railways of the United Kingdom for the year 1904 (Preliminary Statement) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1470

ARMY.—Copy presented, of Return of Stores and Supplies despatched to South Africa during the period 1899–1901 destroyed locally [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1470

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3367 and 3368 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1470

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

POSTAGE ON PARCELS ADDRESSED IN IRISH.—Question, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell (Kerry, W.); Answer, Lord Stanley 1471

MOYVORE POSTMASTERSHIP.—Question, Mr. Hayden (Roscommon S.); Answer, Lord Stanley 1471

THE ENGROSSING STAFF OF THE SASINE OFFICE, EDINBURGH.—Question, Mr. James Hope (Fife, W.); Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 1471

DEFECTIVE WATER SUPPLY IN ISLAND OF LEWIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 1472

UNEMPLOYED WORKMEN.—Question, Mr. Whitmore (Chelsea); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1472

WORSTHORNE COUNCIL SCHOOL, LANCASHIRE.—Question, Mr. Shackleton (Lancashire, Clitheroe); Answer, Sir William Anson 1473

MEETING OF THE POSTAL UNION—REDUCTION OF POSTAGE TO THE CONTINENT.—Question, Sir Thomas Dewar (Tower Hamlets, St. George's); Answer, Lord Stanley 1473

POSTAL RATES FOR PRINTED MATTER TO CANADA.—Question, Sir Thomas Dewar; Answer, Lord Stanley .. .. 1474.

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POSTAGE ON ASSESSMENT NOTICES.—Question, Mr. Crombie (Kincardineshire); Answer, Lord Stanley 1474

SPLIT DUTIES IN THE CENTRAL TELEGRAPH OFFICE, LONDON.—Question, Sir Albert Rollit (Islington, S.); Answer, Lord Stanley 1474

TREASURY REGULATIONS FOR THE ANNUAL DRAWINGS OF THE NEW EXCHEQUER BONDS.—Question, Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1475

BALLYSHANNON UNION NURSES.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); A. Mr. Walter Long 1475

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

MILITARY EXPENDITURE IN SOUTH AFRICA.—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. Bromley Davenport, Cheshire, Macclesfield) 1476

SANDHURST CADETS.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Bromley Davenport 1477

PRIMARY EDUCATION IN INDIA.—Question, Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.); Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) 1477

REVISED GERMAN TARIFF.—Question, Colonel Sadler (Middlesboro'); Answer, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Bonar Law, Glasgow, Blackfriars) 1477

TERMS OF TREATY WITH THE MULLAH.—Questions, Mr. Lyell (Dorsetshire, E.), Sir Wilfrid Lawson (Cornwall, Camborne), and Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answers, The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Percy, Kensington, S.) 1478

SCOTTISH CHURCH DISPUTE.—Question, Mr. Wallace (Perth); Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. Scott Dickson, Glasgow, Bridgton) 1479

IRISH TEACHER'S PENSION FUND.—Questions, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.) 1479

MOYVORE POSTMASTERSHIP.—Question, Mr. Hayden (Roscommon, S.); Answer, The Postmaster-General (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton) .. 1480

POSTAGE ON PARCELS ADDRESSED IN IRISH.—Questions, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell; Answers, Lord Stanley 1480

IRISH NATIONAL SCHOOLS.—Questions, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell, Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.), Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny), and Mr. John Redmond (Waterford); Answers, Mr. Walter Long 1481

IRISH LABOURERS' COTTAGES—SINGLE MEN'S CLAIMS.—Questions, Mr. Hayden; Answers, Mr. Walter Long 1482

GOFF ESTATE, COUNTY ROSCOMMON.—Question, Mr. Hayden; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1483

TRINITY COLLEGE LEASES.—Question, Mr. Lonsdale (Armagh, Mid); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1483

CLONAKILTY AGRICULTURAL STATION.—Question, Mr. Lonsdale; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1484

HOUSE OF COMMONS MEMBERS' WRITING ROOM.—Question, Col. Welby (Taunton); Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour Manchester, E.) 1484

IMPORTATION OF ALIEN MADE GOODS.—Questions, Mr. Black (Banffshire); Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1485

THE ALIENS BILL.—Questions, Mr. Lough (Islington, W.), Mr. Charles McArthur (Liverpool Exchange), and Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.); Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1485

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.—Second Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1486

AGRICULTURAL RATES ACT, 1896, ETC., CONTINUANCE BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.), in the Chair.]

Clause 1:—

Mr. Trevelyan (*Yorkshire, W.R., Elland*) 1486

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 6 after the word 'effect,' to insert the words 'except in respect of The Tithe Rent-Charge (Rates) Act, 1899.'"—(*Mr. Trevelyan.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

The President of the Local Government Board (*Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central*) 1488
Mr. Purvis (*Peterborough*) 1490
Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice (*Wiltshire, Cricklade*) 1491
Mr. Chaplin (*Lincolnshire, Sleaford*) 1491
Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) 1492
Mr. Dillon (*Mayo, E.*) 1494
Mr. Talbot (*Oxford University*) 1495
Mr. Emmott (*Oldham*) 1496
Mr. A. K. Loyd (*Berkshire, Abingdon*) 1497
Mr. Courtney Warner (*Staffordshire, Lichfield*) 1499

Question put.
The Committee divided:—Ayes, 138; Noes, 217. (Division List No. 153.)

Mr. Black (*Banffshire*) 1503

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Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 6, after the word 'if', to insert the words 'for a period not to extend beyond the thirty-first day of March.'"—(*Mr. Black.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. Gerald Balfour 1508
Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice 1510
Mr. George Whiteley (*Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey*) 1511
Mr. Spear (*Devonshire, Tavistock*) 1511
Mr. Leif Jones (*Westmoreland, Appleby*) 1512
Sir Carne Rasch (*Essex, Chelmsford*) 1513
Sir Walter Foster (*Derbyshire, Ilkeston*) 1514
Mr. Dalziel (*Kirkcaldy Burghs*) 1515
Mr. Randles (*Cumberland, Cockermouth*) 1518
Sir Edward Strachey (*Somersetshire, S.*) 1518
Sir H. Meysey Thompson (*Staffordshire, Handsworth*) 1520
Mr. Channing (*Northants, E.*) 1521
Mr. Courtney Warner 1521
Mr. Ainsworth (*Argyllshire*) 1522
Mr. Whitley (*Halifax*) 1523
Mr. Dillon 1524

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 163 ; Noes, 253. (Division List No. 154.)

Mr. Lambert (*Devonshire, South Molton*) 1529

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 6, to leave out the words 'one thousand nine hundred and ten' and insert the words 'until Parliament shall otherwise determine.'"—(*Mr. Lambert.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'one thousand nine hundred and' stand part of the clause."

Mr. Gerald Balfour 1532
Sir Henry Fowler (*Wolverhampton, E.*) 1533

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress and ask leave to sit again."—(*Sir Henry Fowler.*)

The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (*Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.*) 1534
Sir James Joicey (*Durham, Chester-le-Street*) 1539
Mr. Chaplin 1540
Mr. Asquith (*Fifeshire, E.*) 1541
Mr. Gibson Bowles 1541
Mr. Blake (*Longford, S.*) 1542
Mr. Mildmay (*Devonshire, Totnes*) 1543
Mr. George Whiteley 1543
Mr. A. J. Balfour 1544
Mr. Courtenay Warner 1545
Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice 1545

Mr. Lough (Islington, W.) 1546
Mr. Dalziel 1547
Mr. Dillon 1548
Mr. Kearley 1548

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 170 ; Noes, 219. (Division List No. 155.)

Question again proposed, " That the words ' one thousand nine hundred and ' stand part of the clause."

And, it being after half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress ; to sit again To-morrow.

EVENING SITTING.

ROYAL HIBERNIAN ACADEMY, ETC.

Mr. Mooney (Dublin County, S.) 1553
Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.) 1557

Motion made and Question proposed, " That, in the opinion of this House, it is necessary in the interest of the development of modern art in Ireland to provide the Royal Hibernian Academy with a new site, and also to appoint a Commission to inquire whether the present system both of endowment and administration of this and other Art and Science Institutions in Ireland is as equitable and efficient as that of similar institutions in Great Britain."—(*Mr. Mooney.*)

Mr. T. L. Corbett (Down, N.) 1559
Mr. Hemphill (Tyrone, N.) 1560
Mr. Herbert Robertson (Hackney, S.) 1561
Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick) 1562
Mr. Wylie (Dumbartonshire) 1563
Mr. Hugh Law (Donegal, W.) 1564
Sir J. Stirling-Maxwell (Glasgow, College) 1565
Mr. Dobbie (Ayr Burghs) 1568
Mr. Cumming Macdona (Southwark, Rotherhithe) 1569
The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.) 1570

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

ALIEN PILOTS.

Sir William Tomlinson 1573

Notice taken that forty Members were not present ; House counted, and forty Members not being present,

The House was adjourned at twenty-eight minutes after Eleven of the clock till To-morrow.

END OF TABLE OF CONTENTS TO VOL. CXLV.

THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(AUTHORISED EDITION)

IN THE

SIXTH SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT* OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*, IN THE
FIFTH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HIS MAJESTY KING EDWARD VII.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

FIFTH VOLUME OF SESSION.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 13th April, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

CORBETT ESTATE.

Petition for a Private Bill, together with a copy of the proposed Bill annexed thereto; read, and referred to two English judges.

RHYMNEY AND ABER VALLEYS GAS AND WATER COMPANY.

Petition of the Company, praying for leave to introduce a Bill "For further conferring powers on the Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water Company," together with a copy of the proposed Bill annexed thereto; read, and referred to the Examiners.

University College, London (Transfer), Bill [H.L.]. The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 14th and 31st of March last, discharged, and Bill committed.

Leven's Patent Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^{a}

Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill; South Suburban Gas Bill; Wrexham Gas Bill. Read 2^{a}, and committed.

Southend and Colchester Light Railways Bill [H.L.].; South-Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^{a}, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Croydon Gas Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1^{a}; and referred to the Examiners.

Gamble's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. Witnesses ordered to attend on the Second Reading of the Bill.

PRIVATE AND PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION BILLS.

Ordered, That Standing Orders Nos. 92 and 93 be suspended; and that the time for depositing petitions praying to be heard against Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills, also the time for depositing Documents relating to any Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, which would otherwise expire during the adjournment of the House at Easter, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the Recess.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION.

Report of the Estates Commissioners, for the period from 1st November, 1903, to 31st December, 1904.

CONGESTED DISTRICTS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1897.

Seventh Report of the Congested Districts (Scotland) Board to the Secretary for Scotland.

ROYAL OBSERVATORY, EDINBURGH.

Fifteenth Annual Report of the Astronomer-Royal for Scotland.

AUSTRALIA.

Despatch from the Governor-General of Australia on the subject of marriage with a deceased wife's sister, and the reply thereto.

INDIA (TRADE).

Tables relating to the Trade of British India with British Possessions and Foreign Countries, 1899–1900 to 1903-1904.

ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND.

Annual Report for the year 1904.

INDUSTRIAL ALCOHOL COMMITTEE.

Minutes of Evidence taken before the Departmental Committee on Industrial Alcohol; with Appendix.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

LOCOMOTIVES ON HIGHWAYS ACT, 1896.

Order made by the Secretary for Scotland, dated the 5th of April, 1905, prohibiting motor-car traffic on certain roads in the county of Ayr.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS (SUPERANNUATION) ACT, 1898.

Rule amending Rules 28 to 30 of the Elementary School Teachers Superannuation Rules, 1899.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877.

1. Statutes made by the Governing Body of St. John's College, Oxford, on the 17th December, 1904; (1) amending Statute III. (12); and (2) amending Statutes III., V., and XV. of the Statutes of the College.

2. Statute made by the Governing Body of Christ Church, Oxford, on the 7th December, 1904, amending Clause 3 of the Statute of the House concerning Westminster scholarships. (No. 46.)

COLLEGE CHARTERS ACT, 1871.

Application received from the University College of Sheffield for the establishment of a university in Sheffield, referred by His Majesty in Council for the consideration and Report of a Committee of the Privy Council; together with a copy of the draft of the charter applied for. (No. 47.)

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed.

NEW BILLS.

INTOXICATING LIQUORS (HOURS OF CLOSING) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to amend the Liquor Licensing Acts as regards the laws of closing. Was presented by the Lord Bishop of Salisbury (for the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury); read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 48.)

POLLING ARRANGEMENTS (PARLIAMENTARY BOROUGHS) BILL [H.L.] (No. 49).

A Bill to amend the law relating to the arrangement of polling districts in parliamentary boroughs; and

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY COUNCILS) BILL [H.L.] (No. 50).

A Bill to make further provision with respect to the arrangement of polling districts for the election of county councillors. Were presented by the Lord Monkswell; read 1^a; to be printed; and to be read 2^a on Thursday, May 11th next.

CLOSING OF LICENSED PREMISES (CHRISTMAS DAY) (IRELAND) BILL.

Brought from the Commons, and read 1^a; and to be printed. (No. 51.)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Standing Order No. XXXIX. considered (according to order), and suspended for this day's sitting.

ARMY ANNUAL BILL.

Brought from the Commons and read 1^a (according to order).

Moved, "That Standing Order No. XXXIX. be considered in order to its being suspended for this day's sitting."—(*The Marquess of Lansdowne.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

THE UNDER - SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Earl of DONOUGHMORE): My Lords, the Army Annual Bill is the same Bill as that which was passed by your Lordships last year, and I beg to move that it be read a second time.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*The Earl of Donoughmore.*)

LORD MONKSWELL: Before the Bill is read a second time I should like to ask the noble Earl the Under-Secretary whether the conditions for flogging in military prisons are the same as in civil prisons.

THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE: I understand that the regulations are exactly the same. It is certainly the impression in my mind that the conditions in military prisons as to flogging are the same as in other prisons.

On Question, Bill read 2^a; Committee negatived; Bill read 3^a and passed.

CONTRABAND OF WAR.

*LORD REAY rose to call attention to the Correspondence respecting Contraband of War, Russia No. 1 (1905), and to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the invitation of the President of the United States of America to a second Conference to complete the postponed work of the first Peace Conference has been accepted by His Majesty's Government, and whether the following subjects will be taken into consideration at the Conference in order that an understanding may be obtained between the Powers represented at the Conference—

1. The recognition of a demarcation between absolute and conditional contraband.

2. An indication of the categories of articles constituting absolute contraband.

3. The circumstances under which foodstuffs and coal, and raw material such as cotton, can be declared to be contraband.

4. The limitation of the right of search of mail steamers in cases where the neutral Government has a contract with the company owning the steamers preventing it from carrying contraband.

5. The limitation of the right of destroying prizes, under very exceptional conditions with guarantees for compensation.

6. The adoption of precautionary measures for the purpose of securing immunity from the danger of drifting of mines.

7. The discussion of rules with regard to wireless telegraphy.

8. The restriction of the right of search to a certain distance from the theatre of the war.

9. The recognition of the doctrine of "continuous voyages."

10. The constitution of Prize Courts.

He said: My Lords, I wish in the first place to call your Lordships' attention to the correspondence which has been communicated to us respecting contraband of war in connection with the hostilities between Russia and Japan. This is a most interesting correspondence, containing a bold vindication of the rights and duties of neutrals by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. There are several principles laid down in the correspondence which are of such great importance that I do not think I need ask the indulgence of your Lordships in calling attention to them. At page 13 there is a vindication of the distinction between absolute and conditional contraband. There it is stated—

> "In transmitting the Order from which these Rules are taken, the Russian Government stated that all articles enumerated in Rule 6 were regarded as 'unconditionally contraband.'
>
> "This Declaration, it is needless to say, attracted the attention of His Majesty's Government. The description of contraband of war which it contained went far beyond that which has been hitherto accepted.
>
> "It has been held by this country, and our officers have been so instructed, that the term 'contraband of war' includes only articles having belligerent destination and purpose. Such articles have been classed under two heads:—
>
> "1. Those that are primarily and ordinarily used for military purposes in time of war, *e.g.*, arms and munitions of war, military material, etc.—articles of this kind being usually described as absolutely contraband.
>
> "2. Those that may be, and are, used for peaceful or warlike purposes according to circumstances, such articles being usually described as conditionally contraband.
>
> "Articles of the first class destined for ports of the enemy or places occupied by his forces are always contraband of war. Articles of the second class are contraband of war only when actually and especially destined for the military or naval forces of the enemy. Coal and provisions are among the articles which are only conditionally contraband."

I do not think that it is possible to give a better definition of what ought to be, but is not, generally accepted as international law, and the noble Marquess was successful in persuading the Russian Government to give way about provisions but not, I believe, as regards coal, cotton, horses, and beasts of burden. This despatch was dated from the Foreign Office on August 10th, 1904, and I may perhaps ask whether since that concession was made about provisions the Russian Government have given way about cotton and coal, which they could easily do as regards coal when we recollect that the Russian Government in the year 1884, at Berlin, made a Declaration at the West African Conference and refused categorically to consent to any Treaty, Convention, or Declaration of any kind which would imply the recognition of coal as contraband of war.

It is very important that in a matter of this kind our action should be the same as that of the United States Government, and it is very satisfactory that all through these negotiations there has been absolute agreement between the position taken up by His Majesty's Government and by the American Government. There is a circular of June 10th, 1904, issued at Washington by Mr. Secretary Hay, from which I have been allowed to quote, in which the following passage occurs—

> "We are also informed that it is intended to treat raw cotton as contraband of war. While it is true that raw cotton could be made up into clothing for the military uses of a belligerent, a military use for the supply of an army or garrison might possibly be made of foodstuffs of every description which might be shipped from neutral ports to the non-blockaded ports of a belligerent. The principle under consideration might, therefore, be extended so as to apply to every article of human use, which might be declared contraband of war simply because it might ultimately become in any degree useful to a belligerent for military purposes. Coal and other fuel and cotton are employed for a great many innocent purposes. Many nations are dependent on them for the conduct of inoffensive industries, and no sufficient presumption of an intended warlike use seems to be afforded by the mere fact of their destination to a belligerent port. The recognition in principle of the treatment of coal and other fuel and raw cotton as absolutely contraband of war might ultimately lead to a total inhibition of the sale by neutrals to the people of belligerent States of all articles which could be finally converted to military uses. Such an extension of the principle by treating coal and all other fuel and raw cotton as absolutely contraband of war, simply because they are shipped by a neutral to a non-blockaded port of a belligerent, would not appear to be in accord with the reasonable and lawful rights of a neutral commerce."

It is clear from this very definite expression of the views of the Government of the United States that their attitude was identical with that of His Majesty's Government. At page 13 of the correspondence there is another principle of very great importance vindicated by my noble friend, viz.—

> "While thus protesting in regard to this particular category of so-called contraband of war, His Majesty's Government felt themselves bound to reserve their rights by also protesting against the doctrine that it is for the belligerent to decide what articles are as a matter of course, and without reference to other considerations, to be dealt with as contraband of war, regardless of the well-established rights of neutrals."

That protest I believe to be a vindication of this most important principle, that a belligerent has no right arbitrarily—and that was the contention of the Russian Government as communicated in Sir C. Hardinge's despatch of June 8th, 1904—to impose on neutrals his own interpretation of what constitutes contraband of war. And then the noble Marquess went on to explain that—

> "We should not consider ourselves bound to recognise as valid the decision of any Prize Court which violated those rights, or was otherwise not in conformity with the recognised principles of international law."

That principle, again, I hold to be absolutely correct, and it was admitted by Count Lamsdorff. He added that in case the Government were not satisfied with the decision of the Court of Appeal at St. Petersburg, there was always arbitration or some fresh measure to which recourse could be finally had. I need not point out how important it is that Prize Courts should be constituted in such a way that it would be unnecessary to appeal further to arbitration, and so that their decisions could be accepted. If Prize Courts were composed, as they are in the United States and in the United Kingdom, of men well versed in the law, and not only of sailors, or officials not having the requisite knowledge of International Law, their decisions would probably be more in accordance with the recognised principles of international law.

Now I come to page 20 where we read that His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg informed Count Lamsdorff as follows—

> "I told Count Lamsdorff that I presumed that, in the event of the seizure of articles of a conditionally contraband nature addressed to private individuals in the enemy's country, the burden of proof would necessarily rest with the captor. He assented, with the observation that it would be equally to the advantage of the owner of the articles in question to disprove the charge that they were destined for the military or naval forces of the enemy."

That is a departure from what I believe to be the existing rule, which is that usually the burden of proof does not rest with the captor but with the owner of the prize, and I suppose it is not the intention of my noble friend that that principle should be altered, but merely that on account of the concession made with regard to articles addressed to private individuals it should be in this case only that the burden of proof should rest with the captor. Then at page 25 there is this exceedingly important principle laid down:—

> "As I have already had the honour of explaining to your Excellency, His Majesty's Government have no desire to place obstacles in the way of a belligerent desiring to take reasonable precautions in order to prevent his enemy from receiving supplies, but they cannot admit that the right of adopting such precautions implies a consequential right to abolish by a stroke of the pen the long-established distinction between articles which are conditionally and those which are absolutely contraband of war—"

—and I would call your Lordships' special attention to the words which follow—

> "and to intercept at a distance from the scene of operations and without proof of their ultimate destination, a numerous category of articles in themselves of an innocent description, and largely dealt in by neutral Powers, but which that belligerent may have announced his intention of regarding as unconditional contraband of war."

That principle of not intercepting at a distance from the scene of operations is one which is as yet not recognised as a general principle of international law, but we ourselves gave an instance of a concession on the subject during the recent war. At the request of the German Government, Lord Salisbury gave instructions that no examination should take place at Aden or at any place equidistant to Aden from Delagoa Bay. I need not point out how extremely important for our trade would be the general recognition of this limitation of the right of search when obviously it could only be vexatious and could serve no really useful purpose.

Another extremely important principle is laid down at page 11, where the rule of giving hospitality in neutral harbours to belligerent warships is thus limited—

> "The rule above quoted is not to be understood as having any application to the case of a belligerent fleet proceeding either to the seat of war, or to a position or positions on the line of route, with the object of intercepting neutral vessels on suspicion of carrying contraband of war. Such fleet cannot be permitted to make use in any way of a British port for the purpose of coaling, either directly from the shore, or from colliers accompanying the fleet, whether the vessels of the fleet present themselves at the port at the same time or successively.
>
> "His Majesty's Government further direct that the same practice be pursued with reference

> to single belligerent war vessels, if it be clear that they are proceeding for the purpose of belligerent operations as above defined. This is not to be applied to the case of a vessel putting in on account of actual distress at sea."

The limitation here imposed is more severe than that imposed by other Powers, and though I cordially agree with the action of the Government, I quote it because it shows how important it is that this matter should be discussed at a conference in order that it may receive the assent of other Powers. The next extract of great importance which I will quote is that in which the noble Marquess alludes to the sinking of prizes. At page 12 the statement is made as follows—

> "The position, already sufficiently threatening, is aggravated by the assertion on behalf of the Russian Government that the captor of a neutral ship is within his rights if he sinks it, merely for the reason that it is difficult, or impossible, for him to convey it to a national port for adjudication by a Prize Court. We understand that this right of destroying a prize is claimed in a number of cases; amongst others, when the conveyance of the prize to a Prize Court is inconvenient because of the distance of the port to which the vessel should be brought, or when her conveyance to such a port would take too much time or entail too great a consumption of coal. It is, we understand, even asserted that such destruction is justifiable when the captor has not at his disposal a sufficient number of men from whom to provide a crew for the captured vessel. It is unnecessary to point out to your Excellency the effects of a consistent application of these principles. They would justify the wholesale destruction of neutral ships taken by a vessel of war at a distance from her own base upon the ground that such prizes had not on board a sufficient amount of coal to carry them to a remote foreign port—an amount of coal with which such ships would probably in no circumstances have been supplied. They would similarly justify the destruction of every neutral ship taken by a belligerent vessel which started on her voyage with a crew sufficient for her own requirements only, and therefore unable to furnish prize crews for her captures. The adoption of such measures by the Russian Government could not fail to occasion a complete paralysis of all neutral commerce."

A very important principle is here laid down which has not been generally recognised. Of course, where a cargo is only partly contraband it will be generally admitted that you ought not to sink the ship, but protect it and the innocent cargo from destruction; but it cannot be denied that there may be cases of overwhelming necessity in which it would be rather difficult to avoid the extreme measure of sinking the ship, and I should think that would be the view of the Admiralty on the subject. I suppose that the noble Marquess would admit that where a ship is found with a cargo consisting wholly of absolute contraband, such as arms and ammunition, and where it is not possible for the captor to take the ship for adjudication to a Prize Court, that, in such a case, the destruction would be justifiable, unless the delinquent surrendered to the jurisdiction of a Prize Court. I should, of course, wish that when this matter is discussed the opinion of the noble Marquess should prevail, but I am afraid that at a conference it would be found rather difficult to have this prohibition accepted as an absolute rule. I have shown that the principles asserted in this correspondence are of far-reaching effect, that they are a bold defence of neutral rights; but I think the correspondence also shows how important it is that at a conference of the Powers the views of His Majesty's Government should meet with general agreement, in order to avoid friction on account of divergent claims of belligerents and of neutrals.

I now come to the very opportune invitation of the United States Government to submit these matters to a further conference. The United States Government have not laid down a programme for that conference. They state that—

> "It is only by comparison of views that a general accord can be reached as to the matters to be considered by the new conference."

That shows the necessity for negotiations which have to be undertaken between the various Powers in order to settle the questions to be discussed. Obviously the question of the topics to be brought before that conference is one of enormous importance. I may remind the House that the Final Act of the Hague Conference itself contemplated a future conference and left certain matters to be decided at that future conference, and the most important are those mentioned in the invitation of the United States Government and in the Final Act of the Hague Conference, namely, the rights and duties of neutrals, the inviolability of private property in naval warfare, and the bombardment of ports, towns, and villages by a naval force. In the United States invitation it is stated that the—

> "Three points mentioned cover a large field."

Mr. Secretary Hay continues—

> "The first especially, touching the rights and duties of neutrals, is of universal importance. Its rightful disposition affects the interests and well-being of all the world. The neutral is something more than an on-looker. His acts of omission or commission may have an influence—indirect, but tangible—on a war actually in progress; whilst on the other hand he may suffer from the exigencies of the belligerents."

But there is another reason why that conference is important, which, I think, I can illustrate by showing the divergent interpretation at the present moment given to the duties of neutrals. We have only to look at the various notifications which are issued by Governments when war breaks out, to see how very differently that duty is interpreted by different Powers. Here again we are in the fortunate position that our notification and that of the United States Government hardly differ, with this one exception, that in our Proclamation of February 12th, 1904, there is this clause—

> "We hereby further warn all our loving subjects . . . if any of them shall presume . . . to do any acts in derogation of their duty as subjects of a neutral Power in a war between other Powers, or in violation or contravention of the Law of Nations in that behalf, more especially by breaking or endeavouring to break any blockade lawfully and actually established . . . will rightfully incur and be justly liable to hostile capture."

That is very clear, but then there is this rather mysterious addition—

> "And to the penalties denounced by the Law of Nations in that behalf."

Although I have tried to discover what those penalties are, I have not succeeded. That warning does not appear in the American Proclamation, and I think that it would be well, on a future occasion, to omit this rather vague threat, which, I think, it would be extremely difficult to apply. The French Proclamation is less explicit than ours, and there is one very important difference between our Proclamation and the French Proclamation with regard to prizes. In our Proclamation armed ships of either belligerent are interdicted from carrying prizes made by them into the ports of the United Kingdom. That, I admit, is the right principle. But the French Proclamation allows prizes to be taken into their harbours and to remain for twenty-four hours, and to remain even longer in case of need. The French Proclamation also allows men-of-war to take any provisions and stores required for the crew and the safety of navigation. The most curious Proclamation is that of the German Government, which only informs Germans that they have to abstain from all acts which would endanger the neutrality of Germany. Now, it would be impossible to be more brief, and also to make it more difficult for a mercantile community to discover what are the acts which would endanger the neutrality of Germany. Perhaps we have the explanation in a speech delivered by the Chancellor of the German Empire on January 19th, 1900, in which he used these very remarkable words—

> "The German Empire would not withhold its concurrence and support if a prospect were to arise for defining more distinctly than heretofore, in conjunction with other Powers, the lines for an international settlement of the disputed points of maritime law."

I believe the German Government have accepted the invitation of President Roosevelt. Then the Chancellor went on to say that—

> "For the moment, however, the speaker,"

whom he was answering, and who was an expert, was—

> "only too right when he observed that maritime law is still in a liquid, elastic, and imperfect state. . . . In the domain of maritime law the standard of might has as yet been by no means superseded by the standard of right."

I think that language is rather exaggerated, but these various notifications and the correspondence I have quoted show how very important it is that at the earliest moment, as the United States Government wishes, this conference should meet in order that we may get a more satisfactory agreement as to what are the recognised principles of international law.

I need not, after what I have said, enlarge on the various subjects which I have suggested in my Question, and which I should wish to see submitted to the conference. As regards the sixth—

> "The adoption of precautionary measures for the purpose of securing immunity from the dangers of drifting of mines."

It is at present accepted that mines can only be laid in territorial waters. The question of territorial waters itself is an important one, because it is desired in many quarters that the old three mile limit should be extended so as to be more in harmony with the present range of guns. How important this question of mines is, I think, can be shown by the fact that quite recently British shipowners have effected a novel insurance against all risks of floating mines and all damage by fire from naval engagements. That is quite recent, and it shows the anxiety which prevails among the mercantile community with regard to the drifting of mines. Then an entirely new series of questions arises from the introduction of wireless telegraphy. The Chinese Government gave orders to destroy the installation of the Russian wireless telegraphy station near Chefoo. That is an entirely new development, and one which certainly will have to be considered at the next conference. With regard to the recognition of "continuous voyages," that is a subject which towards the end of the nineteenth century was one of very great controversy, but of which since not so much has been heard. But still it would be desirable that the view which has always been taken by our Government should be generally accepted, at all events, with regard to contraband. With regard to the connection of continuous voyages and blockade, the question is, I admit, more doubtful, and it was only in the American Civil War that the doctrine of continuous voyages was applied to a blockade.

It seems to me that the object to be attained at the conference is not to hamper trade between the subjects of a neutral and a belligerent State for peaceful purposes, a policy so well vindicated by the noble Marquess in this correspondence. It is in the interests of belligerents not to provoke the hostility of neutrals, and it is in the interests of neutrals not to arouse the suspicion of belligerents. It is of the utmost importance that the mercantile community of a neutral State should be informed by the Government when war breaks out, of the nature of the transactions which are legitimate and those which are the reverse. If its subjects act contrary to the warning they have received, they do so at their own peril. I think it is extremely important that this principle should be vindicated, that no Government undertakes any responsibility for individual breaches of neutrality, such as the carriage of contraband by its subjects. It is different where an expedition is organised on neutral territory.

I hope I have not trespassed too long on your Lordships' indulgence on a matter which is undoubtedly of a very technical character. My object has been to strengthen the hands of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the endeavour which I suppose he will make to obtain a general agreement to the principles he has so ably vindicated, and which I trust will be accepted when the conference summoned by President Roosevelt meets as soon as peace is restored. A benefit will thereby be conferred, not only on our own mercantile community, but a further guarantee will be given to the maintenance of peace by the removal of obstacles to harmonious international relations.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, the earlier part of my noble friend's observations was addressed to a criticism of the correspondence which lies on the Table with regard to contraband of war during the progress of hostilities between Russia and Japan, and I shall certainly not take exception to anything that fell from him during the course of his observations. On the contrary, I was glad to notice that he gave His Majesty's Government credit for having desired throughout this long and somewhat difficult controversy to uphold the rights of neutrals to the best of their ability. But while I am grateful to my noble friend for that admission, I am bound to say that I cannot myself regard this correspondence with any great feeling of satisfaction, because it seems to me to illustrate in a striking manner the extremely unsatisfactory position in which we find ourselves with regard to so many of these important questions of international law. When I say questions of international law, I think we ought not to allow ourselves to forget that there is no code of international law to which either neutrals or belligerents can, in circumstances like this, appeal, feeling that they can look there for sufficient support. All we have are certain rules which have been laid down from time to time by the Powers themselves, and which, unfortunately, are very differently interpreted by those Powers when they are put in operation. In such circumstances all that a neutral Power, when it finds itself at variance with a belligerent Power, can do, short of resort to means which one would rather not contemplate, is to do what we have done in this case—to press its views as strongly as possible and make energetic protests and remonstrances whenever we conceive that wrong is being done. That is what His Majesty's Government have done in the present case, and perhaps we may, at any rate, say that those remonstrances and representations have not been wholly without effect. They have, as my noble friend has admitted, at all events led to this result—that in the case of foodstuffs and certain other articles the Russian Government accepted our contention that those articles were not absolute, but only conditional, contraband of war.

My noble friend asked me, with regard to the protest which was made as to the inclusion of coal among articles absolutely contraband of war, whether we had since the publication of these Papers obtained any admission from the Russian Government that our view was correct. I am sorry to say that the Russian Government have not departed from the position they first assumed, in spite of all our arguments and of the use of that argument which my noble friend used—I mean the argument that in 1884, on the occasion of the West African Conference at Berlin, the Russian plenipotentiary adopted an attitude diametrically opposed to the attitude which the Russian Government has adopted on the present occasion. But, although we have not obtained any admission from the Russian Government on this point, it is perhaps not unsatisfactory to point to the effect which has been produced by those supplementary instructions which Count Lamsdorff undertook to issue: instructions to which reference is made in these Papers, and the effect of which seems to have been that since last summer there has not been a single case in which a British vessel has been interfered with by Russian cruisers.

I wish before going any further to express my concurrence with what was said by my noble friend as to the identity of view which has obtained throughout these discussions between the Government of the United States and the Government of His Majesty. I believe that in regard to all these points we have seen eye to eye, and that our diplomacy has been directed towards the accomplishment of the same ends.

My noble friend asked me for information with regard to the invitation lately addressed by the President of the United States to this country and other countries to participate in a second conference at the Hague. My Lords, the facts are these. In the month of October we received from the United States Government a circular despatch, in which Mr. Secretary Hay dwelt upon the great work which had been accomplished by the conference of 1899, but expressed the view that, although that conference had done much to bring about the peaceful adjustment of international disputes by reference to arbitration, and although it had done a great deal to procure amendments in the law and custom of war, both by land and sea, it had left unnoticed a considerable number of questions closely connected with those which it had under consideration. In these circumstances the President of the United States desired to know whether the Government of this country would be prepared to associate itself with the United States and with other Powers in a second conference to deal with those further questions. Mr. Hay explained that he had no desire to couple with the tentative invitation which was being issued to us anything like a full and complete enumeration of all the subjects which such a conference might discuss; but he did mention several subjects. Amongst them were these—the rights and duties of neutrals, the inviolability of private property in naval war, the question of the bombardment of ports, towns, and villages, the distinction between absolute and conditional contraband of war, the inviolability of correspondence, whether private or official, of neutrals, and the treatment of refugee ships in neutral ports. These subjects were mentioned, but with the reservation that the list did not by any means presume to be a complete or exhaustive one.

I need not tell your Lordships that the President's invitation was accepted by His Majesty's Government without a moment's hesitation. We, of course, made the reservation that at the proper time it would be necessary for us to consider what questions might be submitted to the conference. With regard to the time at which the conference might be assembled we placed ourselves in the President's hands, and said that whenever he issued his summons we should be prepared to accept his invitation, the date being no doubt selected with reference to the general convenience of all the Powers concerned. Since that time we have heard from the Government of the United States that the result of the President's communications with the Powers has been of the most satisfactory description. He has received a unanimous adhesion in principle to his proposal. Most of the Powers, like ourselves, have made a reservation with regard to the subjects which might be referred to the conference, and in the case of one Power, at all events, reluctance was expressed to take part in such an inquiry while the great war now in progress unfortunately continues. But pending the selection of a date for the meeting of the conference, the President suggested that there might be a preliminary exchange of ideas as to the scope and matter of the reference to the conference, which, he proposed, should take place at the Hague. He also suggested that the International *Bureau* of the Permanent Council at the Hague might, at the proper time, be authorised to draw up a programme for the conference. To those suggestions also we expressed our adhesion, only adding that in our opinion it would be perhaps unnecessary to begin the consideration of the subjects to be referred until the date of the assemblage of the conference was more nearly in sight. That is how the matter stands at the present time.

Now, my noble friend questioned me with regard to the subjects which, in the view of His Majesty's Government, might profitably be dealt with by the conference. He must allow me to say that it would be quite impossible for me, on the occasion of a conversation of this kind, to take upon myself to describe or to limit the subjects which at the proper moment might be selected for reference to the tribunal. But I have looked at the list which my noble friend put on the Paper, and it seems to me to contain a large number of extremely important subjects, most of which have been lately under discussion, and most of which, or some, at all events, of which, might no doubt be considered with a view to their inclusion in the reference. The first three points, for example, which my noble friend has put on the Paper—the distinction between absolute and conditional contraband, the indication of the categories of articles constituting absolute contraband, the circumstances under which foodstuffs and coal and raw material can be declared contraband—those are questions which, as my noble friend knows, we have been constantly discussing, and it seems to me highly probable that those questions, when the time comes, might be considered appropriate for the conference. The limitation of the right of search, I think, is also a question which has been similarly discussed.

Then my noble friend asked me to favour him with an expression of the views of the Admiralty on that extremely difficult question, the right to destroy prizes, by which, I think he meant neutral prizes. [Lord REAY nodded assent.] That is a very much controverted question, which is at this moment before the Prize Courts, and I wish to guard myself from in any way appearing to lay down the law in regard to it. As to the adoption of measures to avoid risk from drifting mines, that seems to me to be a new and very terrible development of modern warfare; and personally I should be delighted, as all of us probably would, if some means could be found to diminish the extent of the danger. As to the other questions, wireless telegraphy, the vexed question of "continuous voyages"—these are questions about which I would rather be excused from saying more than that I recognise their importance, and that my noble friend may be sure that His Majesty's Government will at the proper time carefully consider whether they might not be amongst those to be referred.

On all these points it is quite clear that it would be most desirable, if it were possible, that a general agreement should be arrived at amongst the Powers. I am sure we all agree with my noble friend in what he said in the concluding sentences of his speech. We feel that, if war is at times inevitable, we should all of us do what lies in our power to restrict the area which has to suffer from hostilities, and that even within that area we should spare no pains to minimise the suffering and inconvenience occasioned to all those who are directly or indirectly brought within reach of hostilities. That is our feeling, and holding that feeling, we cordially welcome the initiative of the Government of the United States, and at the proper time we shall gladly associate ourselves with that Government in dealing with these important questions; I share my noble friend's hope that the time when we may be able to address ourselves to that most humane and honourable task will not be far distant.

*Lord ELLENBOROUGH: My Lords, the noble Lord's Question appears to me to assume that Great Britain will always be a neutral, and that she will never be engaged in a life-and-death struggle on her own account for the supremacy of the Channel and North Sea. Now, such a conflict is sure to come; perhaps not for very many years, but still it is one for which we should always be prepared. In our own interests and in those of posterity, we have no right to throw away weapons that may be of use to us in such a contest.

I shall now deal seriatim with the different sections of the noble Lord's Question. As regards the first three sections referred to by the noble Lord, I think it unlikely that any advantage would be gained by an international discussion or by laying down a number of fixed rules. When actually called into operation such rules would probably be found to be unsuited to the circumstances of the case. The President of the United States refers in his letter to the exemption of all private property at sea from capture if not contraband of war. Well, any country at war with England would be sure to declare food contraband if it could get even a partial command of the sea, so that we should be starved without a chance of reprisals. It will be time enough to declare property at sea not liable to capture when property on land is inviolable. Is private property in Manchuria inviolable? Was private property in Georgia inviolable when Sherman's troops marched through it with a broad front applying the torch every morning to the farms in which they had slept on the previous night. Was private property inviolable when the fertile Shenandoah Valley was so pillaged and plundered that it was said that—

> "If a crow came there he would have to bring his own provisions if he meant to stop."

Section 4 limits the right of search when the neutral Government has a contract with the owners of mail steamers. Now, such a contract would certainly be evaded, whenever there was a benevolent neutrality, or whenever the profits that could be obtained by evasion amounted to considerable sums. Besides, has the noble Lord never heard of carrying truck, of cargo being put on board a ship by the officers or by leading members of the crew, without any corresponding entry being made in the ships's papers, or any information being given to the owners? Although owners do all they can to stop the practice, it is still occasionally done. Vacant spaces such as double bottoms, empty tanks, or bunkers are made use of for the purpose. The only effective restraints of the abuse of the right of search are the common sense of the belligerent and the power of the neutral to check his proceedings. For instance, the steamship "Malacca" was seized by a Russian vessel in the Red Sea and was sent to the Baltic to be tried before a Prize Court. The ship that seized her was not a *bona fide* man-of-war, and the noble Marquess succeeded in obtaining her release, because he had the British Navy behind him.

According to international law, as written on paper, Russian men-of war have a right to search and seize any British ships outside the three-mile limit and to send them to the Baltic to be tried. But it is quite certain that had Russia insisted on interfering with British commerce to such an extent as that we should have gone to war to protect our trade. At one time several seizures and examinations were made, but eventually common sense prevailed and instructions were issued which had the effect of restraining the more foolish of the Russian officers. Before negotiations are entered into which may have the effect of causing further legal limitations of the right of search, I hope that the naval advisers of the First Lord of the Admiralty, and naval opinion in general, will be consulted and that a full opportunity will be given for a public discussion of these questions both in the Press and in Parliament.

I confess that I do not understand Section 5, which is as follows—

> "The limitation of the right of destroying prizes, under very exceptional conditions with guarantees for compensation."

Does it refer to prizes taken from a neutral or from the other belligerent? Ships taken from neutrals should, of course, be taken before Prize Courts. The sinking of the "Knight Commander" was an unjustifiable outrage, an act of war against England, whereas the Dogger Bank affair was only an error of judgment, a stupid mistake, perhaps, but still a mistake. But, as long as war lasts, a belligerent will always insist on retaining the right to burn, sink, and destroy an enemy's shipping whenever it suits him. No further conferences appear to me to be necessary for the purpose of discussing either of these points.

Section 6 refers to the adoption of precautionary measures for the purpose of securing immunity from floating mines. Under-water explosives as at present worked are comparatively modern institutions. Inventors are irrepressible. All descriptions of under-water weapons are being improved every day. We ought to be very careful not to tie our hands by assenting to propositions, the full meaning of which we do not yet know, and cannot know unless we have the gift of prophecy. I think that all who have studied the question will admit that if we were at war with any one of the Powers whose sea-coast lies opposite our own, that there would be considerable but unavoidable danger to neutral commerce both in the North Sea and Channel. If a neutral vessel was struck by an explosive below the water-line, it would be impossible to know who was to blame, and, of course, each belligerent would lay the blame on the other.

Section 7 refers to the discussion of rules with regard to wireless telegraphy. Wireless telegraphy is in its babyhood. To lay down laws for all time, to make rules with regard to what we know so little about would be a great mistake. If any agreements are made about it, they should be for a limited period only.

Section 8 restricts the right of search to a certain distance from the theatre of war. The question arises—What is a theatre of war? When this war began it was confined to the Gulf of Pechili and the Japanese seas. It has now extended to the Indian Ocean. A Russian admiral recently thought that it included the North Sea and started a little one-sided war on his own account. Whenever two ships, belonging to different belligerent Powers, are within a thousand miles of one another there will be a theatre of war. If Great Britain was at war with a maritime Power, the theatre of war would be co-extensive with all the oceans and seas of the Globe, with the exception, perhaps, of the Antarctic and Caspian seas.

The doctrine of "continuous voyages" has two sides to it, and I scarcely know which of them the noble Lord wishes to see adopted. With regard to the tenth section, there might be some advantages to be derived by laying down rules about Prize Courts.

If we sign away belligerent rights and find ourselves obliged to resume some of them when at war in the North Sea and

Channel, we shall be giving far more serious offence to neutrals, and shall be more likely to involve ourselves in a war with them than if those rights remained ill-defined and we could make out a fair case for argument. It is far better for us to maintain in theory the rights of belligerents as laid down by Lord Stawell and our Prize Courts, and for the Admiralty to issue confidential instructions to the captains of our men-of-war limiting the actual exercise of such rights. It is better to rely on common sense and expediency than to submit to the hard-and-fast restrictions of a conference. We have now definitely committed ourselves to the blue-water school. Well, I believe that our present Navy is strong enough to protect us once the war is in full swing, but not if its hands are tied by the resolutions of a conference. Our admirals must have a free hand in the North Sea. I hope, therefore, that we shall not enter into such a conference without giving full opportunities to nautical men and others to discuss the expediency of so doing. These are not matters to be left to the decision of inland lawyers who do not know the difference between a sailing brig and a torpedo vessel.

I regret to say that I cannot see a single word in the noble Lord's Question about the duties of neutrals. How about destroyers and submarines creeping along within a three mile limit in those labyrinthine channels between the shoals and islands which form so large a portion of the Dutch, Danish, and Norwegian coasts? Are they to be unmolested if the neutral Power is unable to deal with them with the necessary promptitude, or are our ships to follow them up? As a matter of policy, Belgium keeps up a powerful army to protect her land frontiers, but has no Navy whatever. She relies on England to shield her from maritime attack. Are our enemies to take temporary refuge on her coasts during the day, and then to sally forth and destroy our ships at night? This is a question that should be settled in a friendly manner by Belgium and ourselves, and not by a hard-and-fast rule. These and other kindred subjects are, I think, of more importance to us than any of those that are mentioned in the noble Lord's Question. In conclusion, I would point out that to other nations these maritime questions are matters of secondary importance, but that as Great Britain is dependent on the sea for her food, to her they are matters of life or death.

*LORD COLERIDGE: My Lords, the House, I am sure, is grateful to the noble Lord for introducing this subject, and, if possible, still more grateful to the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs for the answer he has given. We all listened with the greatest possible pleasure to the clear and satisfactory account given by the noble Marquess of what the Government has been doing in this most vexed question. I only rose for the purpose of desiring the noble Marquess to consider carefully the attitude of mind which the representatives of this country should have towards the policy of this country in an international conference.

The noble Lord who has just sat down declaimed to the House about the rights of belligerents. In those days when this country commanded the seas, but when our mercantile marine was small, the rights of belligerents were of overwhelming importance to this country, and by exercising and enforcing those rights we again and again in the war with France attacked the commerce of the enemy, and by such attacks entirely crippled her resources. But since the Declaration of Paris in 1856 the attitude of this country, and I think the interest of this country, have undergone a very marked change. Owing to steam and facility for inter-communication the great trans-oceanic commerce has grown and grown to an extent that would have been thought impossible if predicted by our forefathers. I am happy to say that we, that this country, are the carriers of the world, and our interests very largely differ in this question of neutrals from the interests which were our predominant interests at the end of the last century. Our interests now lie in preserving neutral commerce from interference when other nations are at war, and I hope that our representatives in this forthcoming conference will keep mainly before their minds two important questions—first, that the rights of belligerents over neutral Powers should be, as far as possible, limited, in accordance, of course, with reason and sense; and, secondly, that the classes of goods that should be placed under either conditional or absolute contraband should also be limited, as far as possible. In the limitation of the rights of belligerents over neutral ships and in the limitation of the class of goods which should be declared absolute or conditional contraband—in those two limitations lie the interests of our country, and our representatives should go into the conference imbued with the idea of, as far as possible, insisting upon them.

I only want to draw the noble Marquess's attention to one matter, in connection with which, in my opinion, the Government have taken a somewhat retrograde step. In the last war they certainly did not follow the doctrine which, I thought, had been the doctrine of this country in maintaining the rights of neutrals when proceeding to a neutral port, because, as the noble Marquess is well aware, we seized a German steamer on its way to Lorenzo Marquez, which was a neutral port. I do not know whether the Government of the day quite realised the far-reaching result of that action, but I notice that in "The British Manual of Prize Law," the official Admiralty book of the period, the doctrine with regard to the safety and security of goods on a neutral ship proceeding to a neutral port has been altered; and in the last book of 1904 the doctrine is laid down, I believe, for the first time since the Declaration of Paris that if that neutral port is hard by the confines of the territory of the enemy and if it be thought that the goods, though they pass through the neutral port, are ultimately destined for the enemy, those goods are liable to seizure at the hands of the belligerent. That is a very far-reaching doctrine, and I can conceive circumstances under which it might be applicable in a manner disastrous to British neutral commerce. I hope the decision then taken is not one that is irrevocable, and that at any rate His Majesty's Ministers will consider the subject temperately before they uphold that far-reaching decision. I desire before sitting down to again say how indebted we are to the noble Marquess for his most satisfactory speech.

Lord Coleridge.

GARRISON CHAPELS.

*THE LORD BISHOP OF SALISBURY: My Lords, I rise to ask the Under-Secretary of State for War for information as to the reasons which have led to the long delay in the provision of garrison chapels at Bulford Camp, Wiltshire, and as to the date at which such chapels will be provided there, and also at the new barracks at Tidworth which are now in use by troops. I have a direct personal interest in obtaining a full Answer to this Question, partly as Bishop of Salisbury, in which diocese Bulford Camp and North Tidworth are situated, and partly as chairman of a large local association which does its best to help soldiers on Salisbury Plain and assist chaplains in their ministrations. But I should like to put the question on a broader basis than that. I wish to ask not merely about a chapel for Church of England soldiers, but about garrison chapels in general. I wish to draw the attention of His Majesty's Government, and particularly of the War Office, to the absence of that full recognition of the duties of religion which I am sorry to say seems to me to have characterised their action in regard to Bulford Camp. That camp was opened, if I recollect rightly, as a residential camp in the autumn of 1901, the place having been long used for manœuvres of different kinds. A very large sum was spent upon it, but since that date the War Office has made no proper provision for public worship in the way of buildings. I say no proper provision, because the nature of the provision is this. The War Office hires, for £50 a year, from the association of which I am chairman, a large hall capable of holding from 700 to 800 soldiers, and has also given the chaplain the use of a barrack room; but that large hall, although it was built for the purpose of assisting the War Office in a time of stress—it was erected during the South African War—was not intended by any means to be permanently used for that purpose. We built it for recreative purposes, and we are obliged now to use it for all sorts of recreative purposes. On many nights in the week it is used for stage plays, and those plays, although certain supervision is exercised over them by the officers of the garrison and the chaplain, are not always in harmony with the religious services conducted there on Sunday, and I should very much like an Answer which would tell us that in a very short space of time that co-ordination of such discordant elements will cease, and that we shall be able to use this institute wholly for the recreative purposes for which it was built, without forcing any large gatherings of soldiers for public worship into the open field, for that is really the only alternative at the present moment.

This is a matter which does not merely concern the Church of England; it concerns the nation as a Christian nation. I cannot but feel that the blessing of Almighty God would rest more on all our efforts if we gave a more direct recognition to His share in the affairs of men and of the Army, which is composed very largely of men who have real religious feelings although sometimes they do not display them very openly. This co-ordination of religious and secular purposes is very offensive to both officers and men, and I am sorry to find that there is no definite provision made, so far as I am aware, of any permanent and worthy character in the large barracks at Tidworth, on which I am informed a quarter of a million sterling has been spent. I do think that £10,000 or so might have been found by this time to build a few garrison chapels in connection with that great establishment. I beg to ask the Question standing in my name.

*The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (The Earl of Donoughmore): My Lords, I am afraid I shall not be able to give the right rev. Prelate as satisfactory an Answer as he would wish. The reason why garrison chapels have not been built at Bulford Camp and at Tidworth is the lack of funds, which explains why a great many other things have not been done at both those places. We have not completed those stations and provided everything that we require for the use of the troops. We have not been able to complete the original scheme at either of those places, and last year, when we were unable through want of funds to begin any new work these chapels were held over as well as everything else. I confess it is entirely new to me to hear that the use of the large hall of the Church of England garrison at Bulford for purposes of religious services is objected to by the officers and men. It is on all fours with the arrangements that exist at a great many other stations. After what the right rev. Prelate has stated I shall, of course, have the matter inquired into, and if I find this objection does exist I shall ask the local military authorities to see if they can make some other arrangements. This practice of utilising a building used as a recreation room or as a gymnasium for this purpose is by no means novel. It is a practice followed by the Army and the Navy, and I have not heard any serious objections advanced against it. I am afraid I cannot hold out any hope to the right rev. Prelate that we shall be able to proceed with the building of these chapels in the very near future. We have a great many needs and not very much money with which to supply them. But as soon as we can conveniently do so we shall provide the requisite garrison chapels.

*The LORD BISHOP of SALISBURY: I would ask the noble Earl, when he is making the inquiries to which he referred, to be good enough to inquire whether Sir Evelyn Wood, when commanding that district a year or more ago, did not press this matter on the War Office as one of urgent necessity. I should like to explain that the reason the institute is allowed to be used for various entertainments is that this is the only way of keeping the men happily employed during the winter evenings in camp; but that, I think, does not in the least prevent the more serious-minded from feeling the great incongruity of the situation.

The Earl of DONOUGHMORE: I shall be glad to make that inquiry.

House adjourned at Six o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 13th April, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—Nine Mile Point Railway Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

North Sussex Gas Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Whitechapel and Bow Railway Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Worcestershire County Council (Bridges) Bill. "To transfer the Hundred Bridges in Doddingtree Hundred, in the county of Worcester, to the Worcestershire County Council; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Croydon Corporation Bill. Reported, with Amendments, from the Police and Sanitary Committee [Section B]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Heckmondwike Improvement Bill. Reported, with Amendments, from the Police and Sanitary Committee [Section A]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Great Western Railway (Additional Powers) Bill; Rotherham, Maltby, and Laughton Railway Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill. Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time Tomorrow.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill. Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time Tomorrow.

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill. Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time Tomorrow.

Andover Lighting and Power Bill; Aylesbury Gas Bill; South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Company Bill; South Oxfordshire Water and Gas Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Cordoba and Rosario Railway Bill [Lords]; Entre Rios Railways Bill [Lords]. Reported, without Amendment; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Bill; Edgware and Hampstead Railway Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers on the Corporation of Preston with reference to the Ribble Navigation; and for other purposes." [Preston Corporation (Ribble Navigation) Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers on the Barry Railway Company." [Barry Railway Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers upon the Rhymney Railway Company for the acquisition of lands, the construction of works, and the raising of capital; and for other purposes." [Rhymney Railway Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to empower the Southend and Colchester Light Railways Company to construct piers, to establish and work ferries across the River Crouch and the River Blackwater, to acquire Creeksea Ferry, to raise additional capital; and for other purposes." [Southend and Colchester Light Railways Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers on the South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Companies and the South Eastern and Chatham Railway Companies Managing Committee for the making of new works and the acquisition of additional lands; the purchase of the Sheppey Light Railway; and for other purposes." [South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [Lords.]

Preston Corporation (Ribble Navigation) Bill [Lords]; Barry Railway Bill [Lords]; Rhymney Railway Bill [Lords]; Southend and Colchester Light Railways Bill [Lords]; South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Garlicstown; and Kilsyth; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petition from Banwell, against; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY ACT (1882) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Manchester, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE (TELEPHONE AGREEMENT).

Petition from Manchester, for annulment; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Petition from Manchester, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS (SUNDAY) BILL.

Petition from Chadlington, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877 (OXFORD).

Copy presented, of Statutes made by the Governing Body of St. John's College, Oxford, on 17th December, 1904 (i) amending Statute III. (12); and (ii) amending Statutes III., V., and XV. of the Statutes of the College [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 125.]

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877 (OXFORD).

Copy presented, of Statute made by the Governing Body of Christchurch, Oxford, on 7th December, 1904, amending Clause 3 of the Statute of the House concerning Westminster Scholarships [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 126.]

COLLEGE CHARTER ACT, 1871 (UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF SHEFFIELD).

Copy presented, of Application received from the University College of Sheffield for the establishment of a University in Sheffield, referred by His Majesty in Council for consideration and Report of a Committee of His Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council; together with a Copy of the Draft of the Charter applied for [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

CONGESTED DISTRICTS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1897.

Copy presented, of Seventh Report of the Congested Districts (Scotland) Board to the Secretary for Scotland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LOCOMOTIVES ON HIGHWAYS ACT, 1896, AND MOTOR-CAR ACT, 1903.

Copy presented, of Order by the Secretary for Scotland, dated 5th April, 1905, prohibiting Motor-Car Traffic on certain roads in the County of Ayr [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

INDUSTRIAL ALCOHOL COMMITTEE.

Copy presented, of Minutes of Evidence taken before the Departmental Committee on Industrial Alcohol, with Appendix [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS (SUPERANNUATION) ACT, 1898.

Copy presented, of Rule amending Rules 28 to 30 of the Elementary School Teachers Superannuation Rules, 1899 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS (SUPERANNUATION) ACT, 1898.

Copy presented, of Rule amending Rules 28 to 30 of the School Teachers Superannuation Rules (Scotland) 1899 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SOUTH AFRICA (AUTHORITY OF HIGH COMMISSIONER).

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 15th March; *Mr. Bryce*]; to lie upon the Table.

EAST INDIA (POLICE).

Copy presented, of Report of the Indian Police Commission and Resolution of the Government of India [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

GAS UNDERTAKINGS.

Return ordered, "relating to all authorised Gas Undertakings in the United Kingdom, other than those of Local Authorities, for the year ending the 31st day of December, 1904 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 331, of Session 1904)."—(*Mr. Bonar Law.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Bird, Beamish, and Bandon Estates, near Bantry.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork County, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what were the adjusted rents on the Bird, Beamish, and Bandon Estates, near Bantry, respectively, and poor valuations at the date of sale to the Congested Districts Board; what arrears were due of the tenants at that date, the number of non-judicial and second-term tenants of these estates; at what price each of these estates were purchased by the Congested Districts Board; and, seeing that a number of the holders on these estates are fishermen, and the fishing season will be in full swing about the middle of July, whether he will send an inspector from the Congested Districts Board to said estates at once to carry out the squaring of boundaries and general improvements.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) The following table gives the particulars asked for—

	Bird Estate.			Beamish Estate.			Bandon Estate.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Price of estate	8,017	0	0	2,820	0	0	1,045	0	0
Adjusted rental	392	12	3	150	11	9	48	10	0
Poor Law valuation	376	7	0	189	0	0	57	15	0
Arrears	896	19	0	190	3	6	48	10	0
Number of non-judicial tenants	19			11			none		
Number of second-term tenants	9			none			6		

These estates have not yet been vested in the Congested Districts Board, and they have no legal power to alter the boundaries of holdings until they become owners.

Irish Education—Catholic Clergy and Rule 127 (b).

Captain DONELAN (Cork, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a resolution, unanimously adopted by the Catholic clergy of the diocese of Cloyne (including all the Catholic managers of primary schools within the diocese), strongly condemning the Rule 127 (b) recently issued by the Board of National Education; and whether he will give due regard to this expression of opinion when considering the question.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) The resolution has now been received, and will be duly submitted to the Commissioners.

Irish National School Teachers—Amount of Salaries.

Mr. P. A. McHUGH (Leitrim, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what were the amounts paid to Irish national teachers in personal salaries in the financial year ended 31st March, 1900, and in the financial year ended 31st March, 1901.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) The total amount of State aid to the teaching staff in national schools in the financial year ended 31st March, 1900, was £1,139,896, and in the year ended 31st March, 1901, £1,135,962.

Payment of Teacher of Killarga Evening School.

Mr. P. A. McHUGH: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the fees due to the teacher of Killarga, county Leitrim, evening school for tuition given last year have yet been paid; if not, will he state the grounds on which payment has been delayed by the Board of National Education; and will he direct the Board to give this matter their immediate attention.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) The manager of this school informed the Commissioners in October, 1903, that the evening school was not in operation for the session 1903–4

Estates Commissioners and Purchase of Grazing Lands.

Mr. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have declined to purchase grazing land suitable for distribution if it bears any charge to the Treasury; and, if so, in view of the fact that such charge would be redeemed out of the purchase-money, will he explain why the Estates Commissioners decline to purchase land needed for the enlargement of holdings.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) The Commissioners are unable to identify the particular grazing land referred to, but they are precluded from making advances for the purchase of lands from tenant purchasers until the purchase annuities charged on the holdings have been paid or redeemed.

Belfast Revaluation.

Mr. JOSEPH DEVLIN (Kilkenny, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that the bringing into immediate operation of the recent revaluation of Belfast would involve, now for the first time in half-a-century, the imposition of a burden on occupiers of licensed premises for which it was supposed during that period that no sanction could be found in the law, he proposes to suspend the operation of that revaluation for a definite period or otherwise, so as to prevent any confiscation of property.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) The Court of Appeal has decided that licensed premises have been valued on a proper principle. I see no reason whatever to suspend the operation of the new valuation.

Queen's College (Cork) Students and Art Examinations.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many students of the Queen's College, Cork, submitted themselves at the examination in 1904 for first and second arts in the Royal University; of these how many are holders of prizes, exhibitions, or scholarships in the Queen's College; how many failed to pass the examination; how many obtained first-class honours, second-class honours, first-class exhibitions, and second-class exhibitions; and how many of those who failed to pass these examinations in the Royal University were holders of prizes, exhibitions, or scholarships in the Queen's College, Cork.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state how many students of the Queen's College, Cork, holders of prizes, exhibitions, and scholarships in that institution, have failed during the last five years to pass the ordinary examinations in the arts course of the Royal University of Ireland; and how many were holders of scholarships, prizes, and exhibitions in the Queen's College, Cork, in the subjects in which they failed to pass these examinations.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) I am informed by the president of the Queen's College, Cork, that no record is kept of the students who present themselves for examination at the Royal University or elsewhere outside the college. The function of the college is considered to have ended when it has supplied a student with the instruction furnished in the classes for which he has entered. The inquiries raised in these two Questions cannot, therefore, be answered.

Queen's College, Cork—Average Attendances of Students and Fees of Professors.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many professors of the Queen's College, Cork, have, during the past five years, less than an average of twelve students to attend their lectures, and in what branches of knowledge has there been so limited an attendance at lectures and what are the salaries of the professors; whether, in view of the fact that in the session of 1903–4 the Professor of Law in Queen's College, Cork, had only three pupils, the Professor of Greek had only three pupils, the Professor of Latin had only four pupils, and the Professors of Logic, Metaphysics, and Political Economy had no pupils at all, what explanation, if any, has he to give for the expenditure of £12,000 per annum annually voted by Parliament for the maintenance of this institution.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) During the past five years there have been four professors whose average attendance of students has not exceeded twelve. During the same period the total number of students has increased from 170 to 243. It would be impossible, in the form of an Answer to a Question, to discuss the point whether the expenditure mentioned in the last query is justified by these results.

Trinity College, Dublin.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that more than one-third of the entire income of Trinity College, Dublin, is absorbed by eight individuals, the Provost and senior Fellows of the college, of the average age of seventy-one years, who have long since ceased to take part in the tuition of the college; and whether, having regard to the undoubted dissatisfaction of the Protestant section of the population of Ireland with this mismanagement of public funds, the Government intend to take any, and if so what, steps to make the income of Trinity College, Dublin, of greater benefit to the advancement of education in Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) The hon. Member's Question has been referred to the Provost of Trinity College, who has replied to the effect that the statements contained in the Question are absolutely inaccurate, and he declines to answer this or any similar Question which he regards as merely the vehicle of unfounded and unjust charges against the institution over which he presides. The Government has neither the power, nor the desire, to compel him to answer such Questions. The reply to the last query is in the negative.

The Annfield Estate.

Mr. JOHN O'DONNELL (Mayo, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether an advance of money has been sanctioned for the purchase of the Annfield Estate; whether he is aware that there are about 300 acres of grazing lands on this estate; that there are three congested townlands on its borders, Davros, Mollyroe, and Rathgranaher; and that, in face of this fact, over 100 acres have been given to a man named Ryan, who has already several large farms, and 180 acres to another farmer named Brannick, who has a considerable portion of land elsewhere, leaving only twenty acres of land for the enlargement of holdings on that property; and, if so, whether he will see that these lands will be taken from these persons who have already large areas of land, and divided amongst those whose holdings are uneconomic in the district.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) The Commissioners are unable to identify this estate. If the hon. Member will supply the name of the owner and the locality, inquiries will be made.

The Brown Hall Estate, near Balla, County Mayo.

Mr. JOHN O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Brown Hall Estate, near Balla, county Mayo, has been purchased by the Congested Districts Board so far back as May, 1903; that there are 179 acres of grazing land on the estate; that nothing has yet been done by the Board in the way of dividing the grazing land between the tenants who are in need of an enlargement of their holdings; that the sale took place on the understanding that the grazing lands would be divided without delay, and all be resold to the tenants at the price offered by them, seventeen years purchase; and, if so, when will these grazing lands be striped and given over to the tenants; and whether they will be entitled to the benefit of the reduced payments brought about by the sale since the date on which it took place.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) This estate was purchased by the Board in 1903, and possession was obtained in 1904. The Board are at present carrying out the work of striping and fencing the grazing lands referred to, with a view to their immediate disposal. There was no such understanding with the tenants as that mentioned, and the reduced payments will not come into operation till the lands are sold to the tenants.

The Clanmorris Estate.

Mr. JOHN O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether applications have been received by the Estates Commissioners from two clerks engaged in the office of Mr. Ruttledge, agent to Lord Clanmorris, named Goode and Black, for an advance of money to enable them to purchase portions of the grazing ranches on the Clanmorris Estate, now in the hands of the Estates Commissioners; and, if so, how much has been applied for by each; and whether any will be granted, in view of the fact that they are neither *bona fide* tenant farmers nor the sons of tenant farmers who could come under the Act of 1903; and whether an inquiry will be instituted into the claims of these gentlemen and the dates on which they got small portions of land from estate bailiffs, and the manner in which these portions were obtained, before steps are taken to make grants in their favour.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) The question of the proposed allotment of parcels of land to the persons named is under consideration, and will be fully inquired into.

Fixing of Judicial Rent of Mrs. Donnelly, of Knock Hill, Kilcormac.

Mr. REDDY (King's County, Birr): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the decision in the case of Mrs. Donnelly, Knock Hill, Kilcormac, King's County, heard at the last November sittings of the Land Court in Birr; and whether, seeing that Mrs. Donnelly and her family had expended £370 on drainage and other improvements, he can say on what grounds the Land Commission reduced the rent by only £2 5s.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) In fixing the judicial rent in this case, allowance was made by the Sub-Commission for all improvements on the holding proved to have been made by the tenant. If either party is aggrieved by the order of the

Sub-Commission, he is at liberty to apply to have the case re-heard in the prescribed manner.

Instructions Issued to Inspectors under the Land Act.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland why the Irish Government have refused to lay upon the Table the instructions issued to their inspectors by the Estates Commission, dated February, 1904, and under which the Land Act of 1903 has been worked for a full year.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) I have nothing to add to the reply which my right hon. friend has already given, namely, that the instructions in question were informal, and for this reason have not been laid upon the Table.

Coolie Riot at the Jumpers Deep Mine.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the breaking out, on Sunday last, from the Jumpers Deep mine, of 500 Chinese coolies, and to the fact that for three hours these coolies stoned the mounted police; whether he can state the reason for this outbreak; and, if not, whether he will get particulars.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) I have not yet received the answer to my inquiry for particulars.

The South African Police and Coolie Strikes.

CAPTAIN ELLICE (St. Andrews Burghs): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies under what authority the mine-owners call in the aid of the police to settle a strike among Chinese coolies in South African mines; and whether any other punishment except imprisonment or fine can be inflicted on these coolies.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) Refusal to work is an offence under the Labour Ordinance. I understand that the police were called in to arrest the leaders charged with this offence and to suppress rioting. Besides fine and imprisonment, refusal to work may also be dealt with by the labourer being ordered to be returned to his country of origin at the discretion of the superintendent.

White and Coloured Labour employed at the Transvaal Mines.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state what were the numbers of Kaffirs and of white men at work on the mines of the Transvaal before the war; and what were the numbers of Kaffirs, of Chinese, and of white men so employed, including those engaged on building operations, on the latest date for which figures are available.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) The figures for July, 1899, were—coloured, 107,482; white, 12,530, for the Witwatersrand only. The figures for February, 1905, for the Transvaal were—coloured, 97,882; Chinese, 31,424; white, 15,831. I have no information as yet as to the exact number engaged on building operations.

Government Inspection of Insurance Companies Operations.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether, in view of the fact that insurance companies are organisations mainly dealing with trust funds, the Government will consider the advisability of introducing legislation to enable them to exercise scrutiny and supervision respecting their operations, and also the conditions upon which life policies are issued and forfeitures enforced of premiums paid.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) The hon. Member is no doubt aware of the provisions of the Life Insurance Companies Act, 1870; the Board of Trade have no present intention of introducing amending legislation.

Inverness Mail Delays.

MR. HARMSWORTH (Caithness-shire): To ask the Postmaster-General if he can state the number of days on which the down night mail from London to the North of Scotland was late in arriving at Inverness since 30th September last; and to what extent the mail train was behind schedule time on each occasion.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The subjoined statement shows the lateness in the arrival of the down night mail train at Inverness on week days during the six months from October 1st to the 31st ultimo. I should, perhaps, state that almost every case of considerable delay was due either to unfavourable weather, to some accidental cause, or to the pressure of the Christmas traffic. Greater delay occurred on Sundays, but on that day the working of the mail train is dependent upon the running of a number of trains which are not in any way under my control.

Arrival of down night mail train at Inverness on week days during the six months ended March 31st, 1905—

Punctual - - - -	34 times.
Delay not more than 10 minutes - - - -	81 times.
Delay more than 10, not more than 20 minutes - -	19 times.
Delay more than 20, not more than 30 minutes - -	10 times.
Delay more than 30, not more than 40 minutes - -	9 times.
Delay more than 40 minutes	3 times.

Telephone Exchanges—Fire Risks.

Sir THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the proposed acquisition of the National Telephone Company's undertaking by the Government, he can see his way to suggest to the company the expediency of insulating their telephone cables in a manner most likely to minimise the risk of fires such as those which occurred recently on the company's premises at Cannon Street and Queen Victoria Street; and will he say whether steps are taken to secure that Post Office cables are satisfactorily protected against the risk of contact with electrically charged conductors.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I am assured by the National Telephone Company that they are fully alive to the necessity of adopting all proper precautions for the protection of their exchanges from fires of the kind mentioned by the hon. Member. The question is one that has engaged the close attention of my Department, and all possible means are taken to guard the Post Office system.

Glastrigan (Tipperary) Postal Arrangements.

Mr. P. J. O'BRIEN (Tipperary, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he could see his way to so far improve the postal service at Glastrigan, county Tipperary, and in the neighbourhood of the Grenane Creamery, by the appointment of an additional postman for the convenience to the district of an evening post, with a dispatch of letters at about 4 or 5 p.m. to Borrisoleigh, in lieu of a sub-post office at Glastrigan.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) As I informed the hon. Member by letter on the 25th ultimo, the cost of the postal service at Glastrigan is already very high as compared with the revenue from the correspondence, and I should not be justified in incurring the additional expense necessary for carrying out the improvement desired. I regret, therefore, that I am unable to meet the hon. Member's wishes in the matter.

Postmen's Promotion to Positions of Sorting Clerks and Telegraphists.

Mr. JACOBY (Derbyshire, Mid): To ask the Postmaster-General whether after passing first in the limited competition for sorting clerk and telegraphist where there is one vacancy how long has a postman to wait before taking up such vacancy; and whether such postman could be sent to any other town to take up the duties of sorting clerk and telegraphist if it is afterwards found that there is no vacancy at the office competed for.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) In order to provide suitable persons to fill vacancies without delay, it is necessary to hold competitions in advance of the vacancies; and in some cases vacancies which were anticipated may not occur at once. If the hon. Member will furnish me with the particulars of the case to which he refers I will consider whether a transfer is practicable.

Postage on Publications sent to the British Museum.

Mr. MILDMAY (Devonshire, Totnes): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, seeing that under the Copyright Act of 1842 newspaper proprietors are required to supply, free of cost, a copy of each edition published to the British Museum, and to bear the cost of postage of the same, he will consider the possibility of remitting the charge for postage in the case of newspapers sent to the British Museum under this Act, such newspapers being supplied gratis for the benefit of the State.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The question of relieving proprietors of publications of the cost of postage on copies sent to the British Museum is one which has on several previous occasions been brought to the attention of the Lords of the Treasury and of my predecessors; but it has not been considered that there were good grounds for altering the present practice. The Copyright Act of 1842 laid upon publishers the duty of delivering their publications at the British Museum and at certain other libraries. It was no doubt the intention of Parliament, when that Act was passed, that the cost of transmission to the British Museum of copies of books and newspapers should be borne by the proprietors.

Venezuela.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs how matters stand at the present time with regard to Venezuela, and particularly as to the surcharges and other Customs restrictions imposed by that Republic on imports from Trinidad.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) If the hon. Member refers in the first paragraph of his Question to the British claims, they are being steadily liquidated in accordance with the decision of the Hague Tribunal, and over 50 per cent. have already been paid off. As regards the last paragraph, the surcharges and other Customs restrictions imposed on imports from Trinidad are still in force.

Repayment of Advances under the Small Holdings Act, 1892.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will state the yearly amount required by the Treasury to cover interest and sinking fund for repayment within fifty years of an advance made by a county council under Section 19 (3) of The Small Holdings Act, 1892.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The amount required in repayment of £100 in the circumstances described in the hon. Member's Question is £4 16s. 10d. per annum, payable in half-yearly instalments of £2 8s. 5d.

Prohibition of Trawling in Devon Bays.

MR. LAYLAND-BARRATT (Devonshire, Torquay): To ask the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries whether he can state the cause of the delay in holding the local inquiry into the by-laws prohibiting trawling in the Devon bays.

(*Answered by Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.*) I had hoped that it would have been possible to hold the local inquiry to which my hon. friend refers on May 1st, but it was found impossible to secure the attendance of all the officers concerned on that date, and we had, therefore, no alternative but to postpone it for a short time, possibly until the Whitsuntide Recess. Inasmuch, however, as the alteration which the proposed new by-laws would make in the existing local regulations could not in any case take effect until August 1st next, the delay in holding the inquiry, which I much regret, is not of any serious importance to those interested in the matter.

Sales of Navy Serges.

MR. BARRAN (Leeds, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state the cost price of the blue serges sold in December for £3,000 by auction; and also what quantities of blue serges within 10 per cent. in value have been ordered since that date either by the Admiralty or War Office.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The bulk of the serge sold in December was the remains of a parcel bought six or seven years ago, of a light make for hot climates, which was not taken up to the extent anticipated. It was sold to prevent deterioration, and realised about 80 per. cent. of its original cost price. The serge since bought is of the ordinary No. 2 and No. 3 qualities; that sold being known as No. 1.

Poor Rate Demand Notes.

MR. LAYLAND-BARRATT: To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, when the council of a borough has unanimously approved of the demand note for the poor rate showing in addition to the legal form of demand particulars of the amounts required for specific purposes, including that of education, the Local Government Board would in any way depart from their custom of not interfering to prevent this being done by those responsible for the collection of the poor rate.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) I do not think that I can undertake to say what course the Local Government Board would take in any particular case where the demand note used does not follow the prescribed form.

British Indian Subjects in the Transvaal.

MR. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury): To ask the Secretary of State for India what steps he proposes to take to protect His Majesty's British Indian subjects against the agitation now being stirred up against them by certain white traders in the Transvaal.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) His Majesty's Government adhere to the attitude taken up in my despatch of 20th July, 1904, printed at pages 38 to 45 of [Cd. 2239].

Peat Coal Manufacture.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he could state the name and qualification of the expert selected to inquire into and report upon the various processes of peat coal manufacture in different countries on the Continent; and whether those reports have been forwarded to the Department of Agriculture for Ireland, and if they are available for Members of the House.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) Mr. John T. Tatlow, who has made a special study of the peat industry in its various branches on the Continent, has acted as the Department's expert since 1901. A report on this industry appears in the proceedings of the Industrial Conference organised by the Department in connection with the Cork Exhibition, 1902, and the subject is further dealt with in articles published in the Department's Journal for June, 1902, and March, 1904. Reports other than the foregoing are not available for publication. It may be added that the term "peat coal" is not applied to any known successful process upon the Continent.

Cloncore National Schools.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state what is the accommodation for pupils at the original Cloncore National School, and what was the average attendance for the quarter ending 31st March last; how many pupils is there accommodation for in the new Cloncore School, and what was their attendance for the same quarter; how many pupils attending the new school came from others, and what were the names of the schools they came from; and if he can state what were the special circumstances which led the Commissioners to give a grant for this new school, while there was sufficient accommodation in the existing school under Protestant management for all pupils in the locality.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) The original Cloncore School affords accommodation for eighty-seven pupils, and the average attendance for the quarter indicated was twenty-five. The new school (Cloncore Upper) affords accommodation for eighty pupils, and the average attendance for the quarter indicated was fifty-seven. Fifty-six of the pupils came from other schools, namely, Cloncore (old), Tartaraghan (1), Tartaraghan (2), Derrylard, and Breagh National Schools. The exceptional circumstances connected with this school and which appeared to the Commissioners to justify them in granting aid were considered at more than one meeting of the Board. They are of too involved a character to set forth in a reply to a Parliamentary Question, and under any circumstances the Commissioners consider that no good object could be achieved by making them public.

Strandtown National School Teacher.

Mr. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that the manager, in appointing an assistant teacher in Strandtown National School, Belfast, in August, 1902, made it a condition that she should teach regularly in his Sunday school, and that, on the assistant's refusal to do so, she was forced to resign; and, if so, will he take steps to insert a clause in the Irish agreement forms for teachers similar to that in use in the English Education Department, in order to prevent similar occurrences in future.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) The agreement between the manager and the assistant teacher, executed on the appointment of the latter in August, 1902, does not contain the condition referred to, and the Commissioners have no official knowledge of any such condition. The assistant teacher's resignation was notified to the Commissioners in the ordinary manner, and they have no knowledge that her retirement was enforced from any cause.

Newport (Mayo) Police District Doctors.

Dr. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the names of the police stations comprising the Newport, county Mayo, divisional police district; what is the name and what are the qualifications of the doctor who attends those stations; what is the distance between his residence and each station or barracks; what are the facilities for his travelling to attend a night call at any one of those stations or barracks.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) The particulars asked for are as follows—

Stations in Newport district	Medical attendant.	Distance between his residence and the station.
Achill Sound - - -	Dr. T. H. Croly	9 miles
Dugort - - - -	,,	—
Keel - - - -	,,	4 miles
Ballycroy - - -	Dr. J. F. Cleary	2 miles
Coolnabinnia - - -	Dr. M. McSherry	10 miles
Brockagh - - -	Dr. T. Allman	5½ miles
Newport - - - -	Dr. F. T. O'Rorke	8 miles
Mulranny - - -	,,	19 miles
Glenhest - - - -	,,	16 miles

Each of the gentlemen named is duly qualified and licensed to practise. The facilities for travelling to attend night calls are those usual in country districts, namely, the use of a special car or cycle.

Coolclogher Evicted Tenant—John O'Driscoll's Application.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, in relation to the claim of an evicted tenant, John O'Driscoll, Coolclogher, near Millstreet, whether the Estates Commissioners have received a communication from the evicted tenant's representative contradicting the statement made by the landlady that his father, the late T. O'Driscoll, was not an evicted tenant, but surrendered the farm on receiving compensation; whether he has asked the Commissioners for an inquiry into the case; and whether, in a disputed case of this nature, the Commissioners will appoint an inspector to inquire into the validity of the evicted tenant's claim under the Land Act of 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) If the estate in question should come before the Commissioners to be dealt with, John O'Driscoll's claim will be inquired into.

Mohorough National School Teacher's Pay.

MR. KENDAL O'BRIEN (Tipperary, Mid): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, seeing that the salary paid to the teacher of Roll No. 5,094 National School, from 1st June, 1900, to 1st April, 1901, was calculated at £87 per annum, he will say whether there was any departure from the arrangement of calculating the amount of equivalent grant in lieu of results fees, by basing on the average amount earned for the three years previous to the abolition of payment by results; and, if so, under what circumstances, and in what manner, did this departure operate.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) The amount of equivalent grant in lieu of results fees paid in September, 1900, to Mr. M'Carthy, teacher of Mohorough National School, was calculated on the actual earnings in results fees, and the Customs and Excise grant paid for the three preceding years. There was no departure from the usual procedure in this case.

County Mayo Extra Police.

MR. O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state how many of the men constituting the extra police force in the county of Mayo in 1899 and 1900 were drafted in from other counties and how many from the depot.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) The extra force consisted of forty-seven men drawn from counties and three men from the depot.

County Mayo Royal Irish Constabulary Free Force.

MR. O'KELLY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the strength at which it was decided to maintain the Royal Irish Constabulary free force quota in the county of Mayo at the triennial redistributions in 1897 and in 1900.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) At the triennial redistributions in 1897 and 1900 the free force of the county of Mayo was fixed as follows:—In 1897, 474 sergeants and constables; in 1900, 515 sergeants and constables.

Purchase of Evicted Holdings and Grazing Tracts in Tipperary.

MR. CULLINAN (Tipperary, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state in how many cases have the Estates Commissioners been negotiating the purchase of evicted holdings in Tipperary county; how many they have succeeded in purchasing; how many have they failed in, and why; how many grazing tracts they have been purchasing; how many they have succeeded in; how many they have failed in, and why.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) In two cases evicted tenants have been reinstated. In eight cases the Commissioners have been unable to effect reinstatement owing to the unwillingness of the landlord to sell the holding singly. In one case negotiations are still pending.

Insane Paupers at Cork District Lunatic Asylum.

MR. GILHOOLY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a resolution, passed unanimously by the Committee of Management of the Cork District Lunatic Asylum, calling on him to promote a Bill to enable the committee to deport insane patients of other nationalities and counties who have been committed and remain chargeable to the local rates, and pointing out that those patients occupy the places in the institution erected, maintained, and taxed for local patients, thereby contributing to the overcrowding which at present exists in the asylum; and, if so, whether he purposes to give effect to it during this session.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) The resolution has been received. My right hon. friend is unable at present to give an undertaking to introduce legislation on the subject.

Nolan Farrell Estate, County Mayo.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Nolan Farrell Estate, near Ballyhaunis, county Mayo, has been purchased by the Congested Districts Board; that there is an extensive demesne on the estate; that this demesne has been let to a grazier, named Curran, up to the 1st of May next, although a number of tenants in the vicinity, whose holdings are uneconomic, were anxious to procure it for the use of their cattle; whether the letting was made by the Congested Districts Board or the landlord, and on what terms; and whether steps will be at once taken to ensure that there will be no further letting to this man, and that the place will be divided amongst the tenants on the estate for the purpose of enlarging their holdings or creating new ones.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) The Board has only recently received possession of these lands. The occupier, Mr. Curran, has been allowed to remain in occupation until 1st May to give him an opportunity of disposing of his stock without loss. He is to pay £15 for the grazing for this period. The Board will take over the lands on the date mentioned and deal with them as they consider best pending the rearrangement of the estate, which cannot be commenced until the Board are legal owners of it.

Alleged Ill-treatment of Indian Coolies in the Natal Coal Mines.

SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in view of the frequent Police Court proceedings arising from the alleged ill-treatment of Indian indentured coolies in the Natal coal mines, he will call for a Report from the Natal Government on the subject and suggest the holding of a public inquiry thereon.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) There is a protector of Indian immigrants in Natal whose duty it is to watch over their interests. I have referred to his last two annual reports, and do not find anything which would warrant such action as the hon. Member suggests. Indians are not compelled to accept service in the mines. During 1903 (the last year for which I have a report) the majority of the 504 men who re-indentured themselves did so to the coal mines and other employers not engaged in agriculture.

British Indian Traders in Cape Colony.

SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if his attention has been drawn to an enactment by the Government of Cape Colony seeking to suppress British Indian traders by means of a clause requiring applications for trading licences to be made in a European language or in Yiddish; and whether, having regard to the fact that such a requirement is calculated to deprive those traders of the rights they have hitherto possessed, he will advise the Crown to withhold assent to the enactment in question.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) I should be obliged if the hon. Member would indicate the special enactment to which he refers.

Liquor Law in the Transvaal—Treatment of British Indians.

SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he is aware that the Liquor Law of the late South African Republic to the effect that no negro, aboriginal, native, or coloured person may be served with alcoholic drink, has been made applicable now by the Transvaal Government to respectable and educated Eurasians and other subjects of His Majesty from India employed on the railways of the country; and whether he will represent to the Transvaal Government that such application of the prohibition is not called for, since the object of the provision in question was solely to prevent intemperance among the natives of the country and immigrants of the uneducated coolie class.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) Under Sections 46 and 48 of the Liquor Licensing Ordinance passed by the Transvaal Legislature in October, 1902, no coloured person may be supplied with intoxicating liquor [Cd. 1365], and under Section 1 (c) of Ordinance No. 68 of 1903 a railway employee's liquor licence authorises a sale of liquor only to white male persons of the age of sixteen years and upwards who are employed on the construction of any railway works in the Transvaal. It is admitted that the liquor legislation of the Transvaal has had a salutary effect, but I will bring the point raised by the hon. Member to the notice of the officer administering the Government and ask for a report. Provision has been made under Proclamation No. 35 of 1901, printed at p. 42 of Cd. 904, for exempting coloured persons of education from special legislation affecting natives and coloured persons generally.

Army Horses Suffering from Epizootic Lymphangitis.

Mr. HAYES FISHER (Fulham): To ask the Secretary of State for War what number of the 106 Army horses which were suffering from epizootic lymphangitis in July last have been slaughtered; what number of fresh cases have occurred among Army horses in England, Scotland, and Ireland respectively, since that time.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) Of the 108 horses suffering from this disease in July last sixty have been destroyed. Since that date ninety-six fresh cases have occurred in England, one in Scotland, and five in Ireland.

Pension of Michael Phelan, late 43rd Foot Regiment.

Mr. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he has received an application for increase of pension from Michael Phelan, Thomastown, county Kilkenny, late of the 49th Light Infantry Regiment, in which he served twenty-one years, obtaining during that period an Indian Mutiny medal and a New Zealand war medal, being eventually discharged on a pension of 1s. per day for life; whether, in view of his long service and present circumstances, he intends to grant Phelan this increase; and, if so, to what extent.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The man referred to in the Question is Michael Phelan, late 43rd foot. An application for an increase of his pension was dealt with in June last by the Commissioners of Chelsea Hospital, who informed Phelan that he was in receipt of the highest rate of pension for which he was eligible under the regulations in force at the time of his discharge, and that he was not eligible for any increase. As he was not wounded or discharged for disability he cannot be granted any increase under the special concession made to Crimean and Indian Mutiny veterans who fulfil either of these conditions.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Distribution of Profits of Natal Field Force Canteens.

Dr. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can say to what use the £470,000 balance standing to the credit of the Natal Field Force canteens, as described by Lieutenant-Colonel H. O. Morgan before the Royal Commission on the South African War, has been put; whether this sum has been applied in part or in full to the establishment of South African garrison institutes; whether these institutes are now being conducted, as stated by Colonel Morgan, as canteens conducted by a civilian *personnel*; what War Office supervision, if any, there is over their business transactions; what War Office audit, if any, there is of their accounts; and to what purposes are their profits, if any, applied.

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.): The Army canteens, during the South African War, were started without any assistance from public funds, and the profits accruing therefrom have been applied for the benefit of the Army in South Africa, after providing for a gratuity to regiments leaving the country. The alleged credit of the Natal Field Force canteens consisted of a considerable amount of stock as well as cash. At the conclusion of the war, the full price was not realised owing to deterioration arising from the goods being stored in the open and the enormous mass of stock thrown suddenly upon the market at the close of the campaign. In round figures, the following sums have been distributed out of the profits of the Field Force canteens—

	£
Leaving grants to regiments -	111,000
Building Soldiers' Institute, Pretoria - - - -	40,000
Working Capital, South African Garrison Institutes - -	70,000
Building officers' clubs, etc. -	33,000
Total - -	£254,000

There still remains an amount of the most unsaleable portion of the Field Force canteen stock, valued, with a heavy reduction for deterioration, at £33,000. Whatever sum may be realised out of this has been placed at the disposal of the General Officer Commanding South Africa, to be expended for the benefit of the soldier, in the establishment of dairies, laundries, etc., and in the better equipment of recreation rooms. The canteens in South Africa are now run in connection with the South African Garrison Institutes, the headquarters of which are in Pretoria, and the profits are applied for the benefit of the troops in South Africa. The institutes are managed by a Board of Directors, composed of officers, one of whom is appointed managing director. The board is assisted by a general manager and a chief accountant, who are civilians. The remainder of the staff are civilians, as serving soldiers are not permitted to be employed in canteens. The accounts are audited by a chartered accountant. There is no War Office audit and the full responsibility for the management of the institutes rests with the General Officer Commanding, as is the case in this country and in the Colonies.

War Office Payments to the British South Africa Company for the Rhodesian Field Force.

DR. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state what was the total of sums paid by the War Office on account of expenditures incurred by the Chartered Company during the South African War, in respect of the field force which operated from Beira; how many men that force comprised; and whether detailed vouchers of all expenditures have been called for and received by the War Office.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The total paid by the War Office to the British South Africa Company on account of expenditure for the Rhodesian Field Force was £1,681,618. The number comprised in that force was about 5,400 officers and men. Detailed vouchers of all expenditure were received from the company.

South African War Contractors.

DR. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, as a result of the statement put in before the Royal Commission on the South African War, respecting complaints of stores on arrival, as set forth at pp. 250–253 of the appendices to the Report, any firm or firms of contractors were struck off the War Office lists of contractors; and, if so, which.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The reply is in the negative.

Destruction of Milford Haven Fort Guns.

MR. LLOYD MORGAN (Carmarthen, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that several nine-inch R.M.L. guns weighing about twelve tons each, lying at Stack and Popton Forts, Milford Haven, have been thrown into the sea; that for a considerable time during the last training the Carmarthen Royal Garrison Artillery Militia were employed in disposing of these guns in this way; if so, will he say whether it is proposed to employ them during the coming training in similar work and to destroy more guns of this description; and whether the guns cannot be used or disposed of in some useful way.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: In connection with the rearmament of the Milford Haven forts certain obsolete guns, carriages, and mountings had to be disposed of. The contractors who bought the carriages, etc., would not buy the guns; and the guns not being worth the cost of removal were thrown into the sea. As the Regular garrison artillery were already fully employed on the work of rearmament the General Officer Commanding decided to employ the Militia garrison artillery in the work of dismounting these guns; such a task would form part of their legitimate training. Endeavours are always made to dispose of guns locally by sale, but if this cannot be effected they must be disposed of in the cheapest manner.

MR. LLOYD MORGAN: Are the men to be thus employed again this year?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The dismantling of guns is a very important part of their training.

Essex Regiment—Case of Major Nason.

SIR CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that Major Nason, Essex Regiment, has been detained at Wellington, Madras, although compulsorily retired by age on March 8th; and whether, seeing that he has offered to make himself liable for all accounts during the time he was in command, he will explain why, under these circumstances, he is not allowed to come home.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I am not acquainted with the circumstances alluded to. This matter is one which concerns the Indian Government, and the Question should be addressed to my right hon. friend, who, I understand, is making inquiries.

2nd Battalion Essex Regiment.

SIR CARNE RASCH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will explain why the 2nd Essex, which was to have returned home this trooping season, has been countermanded, seeing that this battalion has recently served seventeen years abroad, as against three at home.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: This battalion went abroad in April, 1904, for a short tour of service, which under ordinary circumstances would have lasted until the spring of 1907. When it was resolved to reduce the number of battalions in the Colonies this battalion was included in the number to come home in 1905–6. These reductions have not proceeded as rapidly as was at one time expected, and have necessitated the countermanding of the orders for the 2nd Essex to come home.

Dublin University Military Education for Army Candidates.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the War Office authorities have been in communication with those of the University of Dublin as to the provision of military education for Army candidates, and that the persons appointed by the University authorities to give this instruction (including strategy and tactics) are all civilians; and whether the War Office authorities are satisfied with this arrangement.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Regulations have recently been approved by which University candidates can obtain Commissions in the Army. So long as these candidates fulfil the conditions imposed by these regulations the War Office does not interfere with details such as the selection of lecturers and instructors. But the War Office is always ready to advise on these matters when the Universities desire assistance.

Army Act.

*MR. HIGHAM (Yorkshire, W.R., Sowerby): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether arrangements can be made for the issue of the Army Act, revised to 1904, to Members of this House who may wish to have copies.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Copies of the Army Act revised to 1904 were sent to the library last session. Further copies were sent to the library this session for the debate on the Army Annual Bill, and some additional copies were sent yesterday. I hope this supply will meet the requirement of Members. The Act is on sale and copies may be purchased.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Does not the House order the Paper, and has not every Member a right to a copy?

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The Act is not issued as a Parliamentary Paper.

An HON. MEMBER: It ought to be.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I think not.

Army Rifles.

Captain NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether, seeing that orders have been placed for 222,000 short rifles, of which 158,000 are already manufactured, and that the programme for the year only provides for the supply of rifles for the mounted troops, he can state the number of rifles required for the latter, and how the surplus rifles are to be disposed of; and can he give the number of rifles in stock for dismounted troops.

*The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the WAR OFFICE (Mr. Bromley Davenport, Cheshire, Macclesfield): The number of short rifles at present ordered for land service, exclusive of India, is 165,000. The number required to arm the mounted troops and to replace carbines with other units is 150,000, in addition to which the necessary reserves are required. The stock of long rifles is sufficient to arm all dismounted troops armed with rifles.

Captain NORTON: Cannot the hon. Gentleman give me the number in stock?

*Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: It is not deemed desirable to publish the number in reserve.

Army Boot Contracts—Northampton Strike.

Mr. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the strike now going on in Northamptonshire among the Army boot operatives is due to the setting aside by certain contracting firms of the statement of wages agreed to by representatives of the manufacturers and of the Boot and Shoe Operatives Union; and that it is alleged on the part of the union that the statement of wages thus agreed to and submitted to the War Office represents a reduction of from 7 to 13 per cent. on the corresponding payments accepted as current after the close of the war under previous contracts; that it is alleged on behalf of the union that certain firms who have obtained contracts this year have been giving out or offering the work at prices representing a loss to the worker ranging from 3¾d. and 5¾d. per pair of boots to 7¾d. and 10½d. as compared with the corresponding prices agreed to in the statement; and that ankle Blucher Army boots have been given out by one of these firms to women for closing at 1s. per dozen, whereas the statement price for this operation is 2s. 6d. and whether this represents an average wage to these women of 6s. a week instead of 15s. a week; and whether, having regard to the undertaking of the secretary of the trade union to make good these allegations if an inquiry is held, he will forthwith direct an inquiry to be made into them; and, if the facts are established, take steps to enforce the fair wage clause of the Government contracts.

*Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: The War Department is aware of the facts and allegations referred to in the hon. Member's Question. The duty of the Department, however, in matters relating to wages is limited to securing the strict observance of the Wages Resolution, which is incorporated in all its contracts, and stipulates that the wages paid shall be those generally accepted as current in each trade for competent workmen in the district where the work is carried out. So far as concern the men who are on strike, it would appear to be impossible for the Department to insist upon a particular rate being fixed as current at a moment when such a rate is precisely the matter in dispute. With reference to the latter portion of the hon. Member's Question, in which he indicates what appears to be the payment of a very low rate of wage in a particular case, if he will kindly furnish me or cause me to be furnished with the necessary information, I will at once cause an inquiry to be made with a view to ascertaining whether any action can properly be taken in accordance with the terms of the current rate clause of the contract.

Mr. CHANNING: Am I to understand that if proper representations—giving names and prices, are made to the War

Office, not merely in respect of these cases but of others in which the wages are said to be below the current standard, the hon. Gentleman will cause inquiry to be made?

*Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: Certainly, if there is any reason to suppose that the wages are below the rates accepted as current in the district.

Mr. CHANNING: Will the hon. Gentleman give special attention to the fact that the trades union guarantee the accuracy of the figures they have given?

Mr. GEORGE WHITE (Norfolk, N.W.): Is it not a fact that a statement of wages is agreed upon and that the contracts are based on it, so that it is easy to find out on what basis of wages the contracts are taken?

*Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: If that statement were accepted throughout the district as the current rate the War Department would be bound by it. But we are not at present in a position to say that it is so accepted.

Russian Import Duties on Indian Tea.

Mr. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Russian import duties on Indian tea have been raised in the past few years; if so, when were they raised; whether any reason was assigned by the Russian Government for raising them; and whether any negotiations have taken place on the subject.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl Percy, Kensington, S.): My right hon. friend has asked me to answer this. The duties were raised in September, 1903, so far as the European frontiers and Black Sea ports were concerned, but not as regards imports through Dalny and Vladivostock, through which route the trade immediately showed a considerable expansion. It was understood that the step was a protest against the action taken by His Majesty's Government to give effect to the Brussels Sugar Convention. As regards the last part of the Question, the Answer is in the negative.

Indian Judicial and Legal Appointments.

Mr. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he can state in how many instances appointments to judicial and other legal offices in India have been, since the 1st of January, 1902, made of candidates from home; and in how many of those instances the appointees have been members of the English, Scotch, and Irish Bars respectively.

Earl PERCY: Three such appointments of candidates from home have been made since the date mentioned—two to Judgeships of Indian High Courts, and one to the post of Legal Member of the Governor-General's Council. Of the three gentlemen appointed two have been members of the English and one of the Irish Bar.

Nautical Assessors—Age Retirement Regulations.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many nautical assessors are there appointed for service during the present year; how many of them are over sixty, seventy, and seventy-five years of age respectively; how many were appointed when over the ages of sixty, seventy, and seventy-five respectively; and how many belong, or have belonged, to the naval service and the merchant service respectively.

*The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's): There are thirty-two nautical assessors appointed for service during the present year. Twenty of them are over sixty years of age, while seven are over seventy and one is over seventy-five. At the quinquennial revision of the list, which took place at the end of last year, nineteen assessors who were over sixty, including seven over seventy and one over seventy-five, received reappointment. These had all been on the list before, some of them for a number of years. One assessor over sixty was newly appointed last month. Nineteen assessors have belonged to the merchant service and five to the Navy. Several assessors who have belonged to the merchant service are also Royal Naval Reserve men.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: There is one gentleman over seventy-five. At what age was he appointed? Cannot the right hon. Gentleman say how many were appointed when over the age of sixty?

***Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS**: I think my Answer covers that. Some of them had been appointed for a number of years and they grew up to these ages in the service.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Does the right hon. Gentleman propose to take any steps to deplete the list of these senile assessors?

***Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS**: It has been recently decided that on the next and all subsequent revisions, all assessors over sixty-five will be retired; and that no one who is sixty-five years of age, or older, will in future be eligible.

Licensing Rules—Meetings of Compensation Authorities.

***Mr. LEIF JONES** (Westmoreland, Appleby): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, under the licensing rules, the compensation authority is empowered to exclude the Press from the preliminary meeting at which the compensation authority has under consideration the report of the renewal authorities as to licences not required in their districts.

***Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS**: Rule No. 12 provides that no person shall have a right to be present at the preliminary meeting, other than the members of the compensation authority and representatives of the renewal authority, unless authorised by the compensation authority to attend.

***Mr. LEIF JONES**: Can they authorise the presence of the Press and the public if they think fit to do so?

***Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS**: The Secretary of State is required by Section 6 of the Act to provide for consultation with the renewal authorities as to their reports, and the rule quoted was drawn for that purpose. There is a clear distinction of meaning between such consultation and public hearing, which is required by Section 1 (2) of the Act, and provided for by Rules 14 to 20; and it appears to be proper that the consultation should be held under such conditions as the authorities concerned think right.

***Mr. LEIF JONES**: Then may they admit the Press?

***Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS**: I conclude if they desire they can do so.

Irish Swine—Restrictions on Importation into England.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether, before imposing restrictions on the importation of Irish swine into England, his Department had communications with the Irish Department of Agriculture; whether the latter made any protest against, or objection to, the proposed action of the English Department; whether he is in communication with the Irish Department to ascertain when swine fever may have so abated as to allow of the rescission of the existing Order; and whether he can hold out now any hope for a change in the Order at a near date.

***The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of AGRICULTURE** (Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes, Huntingdonshire, Ramsey): The Answer to the first two inquiries is in the affirmative. With regard to the third and fourth, I may say that we receive from the Irish Department weekly returns of the number of outbreaks of swine fever in Ireland, but, in the absence of any general restrictions on the movement of swine in Ireland, I cannot hold out any hope of the relaxation of the Order at present.

Mr. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.) asked whether the members appointed under the Board of Agriculture Act considered this Order before it was issued?

***Mr. AILWYN FELLOWES**: The Order was issued after full communication with the Irish Department.

Mr. FLAVIN: But did the Committee appointed under the Act in England ever meet to consider it, and if so, when?

*Mr. AILWYN FELLOWES: The whole question was considered by the Board of Agriculture.

Mr. FLAVIN: Where?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

London Unemployed Relief Expenditure.

Mr. BENN (Devonport): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, in regard to the Unemployed Relief Expenditure, London, whether any of the borough councils adopted the suggestion of his predecessor to aid the fund out of the rates; and, if not, does he still propose to include in the forthcoming measure rate-aid for the relief of the unemployed.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): I understand that none of the borough councils have contributed towards the funds of the Central Unemployed Committee, and that no application has been made to them by the Committee for this purpose. I cannot undertake to state beforehand what may be the proposals in the measure referred to in the Question.

Outbreak of Smallpox on the ss. "Nile."

Mr. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Local Government Board is he aware that the port sanitary authorities at Southampton had their attention called on or about March 18th last, on the arrival of the ss. "Nile" at that port, to a case of smallpox on board that vessel; that the patient died on that date; that the port sanitary authorities allowed two men named P. Dalton and P. Smith to go to their destination in the rural district of Mullingar, county Westmeath, after being in contact with this case of smallpox; and that the district authorities were unable to trace these men until the 31st ultimo, when it was discovered that one of them (Smith) was suffering from smallpox in the town of Mullingar; whether, in view of the expense the rural council of Mullingar have been put to in this matter and the danger to the public health, he can state why these men were not quarantined for fourteen or sixteen days before being allowed to proceed to their destination; and whether he proposes to censure the port sanitary authorities at Southampton for their action in this matter.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The medical officer of health at Southampton reports that the "Nile" arrived there on March 18th with a case of smallpox on board and that the patient died as the vessel was entering the port. I have no information as to the two men referred to in the Question, but the medical officer states that notification was given to the medical officer of health of every district to which any of the passengers or crew were proceeding. I am, however, sending a copy of the Question to the town council and am asking for a detailed report of the facts as to smallpox in relation to this vessel together with an account of the measures adopted for preventing the spread of the disease on board and elsewhere. I may add that there would be no power to detain any of the passengers or crew who were not actually suffering from the disease.

Mr. HAYDEN: Is there no power in England to detain persons who have been in contact with cases of smallpox? My information is that the Irish authorities have done it.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: There is no such power in England at all events.

Foreigners and British Pilotage Certificates.

Mr. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he will give the number of foreigners at present holding British pilotage certificates, also the number of such certificates granted by the Board of Trade after local pilotage authorities had refused to grant them, on the grounds of local and national inexpediency.

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Bonar Law, Glasgow, Blackfriars): The number of foreigners holding British pilotage certificates according to information obtained in 1902 was seventy-three, and the present number is estimated to be somewhat larger. Two certificates have been granted by the Board of Trade to foreigners in the circumstances stated by the hon. Member, but of these one is no longer in force.

Civil Service—Assistant Clerks.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that a number of assistant clerks (new class) have received no benefit whatever from the slightly improved scale of salary granted by the Treasury two years ago, and that these officers are thus in receipt of a salary £10 a year less than that allowable to new entrants after the same amount of service; and whether he will take steps to have the officers in question placed on an equal footing as regards salary with junior members of their class, and if any compensation is proposed to be given them for the loss they have already sustained.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.): I am unable to give retrospective effect to the concession granted in 1902. The officers to whom the hon. Member refers, though they may not have benefited by the concession, sustained no loss whatever thereby.

MR. NANNETTI: Will the hon. Gentleman look into the Order in Council?

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH asked that any further Question should be given notice of.

Prudhoe School.

MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether the Board intend to pass the revised plans for alterations to Prudhoe School forwarded to the Board on February 22nd; whether he is aware of the urgency of the case, and that the condition of the school has been condemned by the Government inspector, and in a Report of the Local Government Board, as well as by the various Northumberland authorities.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University): The plans have now been approved; I am sorry for the delay, which has, however, been unavoidable.

London Education Expenditure.

MR. BENN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education if he will state the amount of the additional rate incurred to date in the administration of the London Education Act, 1903; and whether he can at present give any estimate of the total addition to the rates which that measure involves to the Metropolis.

SIR WILLIAM ANSON: The hon. Member is, I think, in a much better position than I am to make an estimate of the addition (if any) to the rates which the London Education Act involves. The Board have no information on the subject.

Durness Parish Council—Dispute with Medical Officer.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Lord-Advocate whether he is aware that the legal expenses recently incurred by the Durness Parish Council by their litigation with the parish medical officer have been put upon the parish rates; and whether, seeing that those ratepayers who jointly pay more than two-thirds of the parish rates protested against the action of the chairman and two members of the parish council which led to these legal expenses being incurred, he will say whether the Local Government Board for Scotland have sanctioned the placing of these legal expenses upon the parish rates, and, if so, under what heading.

*THE LORD-ADVOCATE (Mr. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgton): I am informed that the Local Government Board have not sanctioned the expenses referred to being put upon the parish rates.

Valuation Bill for Ireland.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN (Kilkenny, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he proposes to introduce a Bill this year dealing with the question of valuation in Ireland; and, if so, whether he intends to give effect to the recommendations of last year's Select Committee on Irish Valuation.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): It is intended to bring in a Bill dealing with a portion of the machinery of valuation in Ireland. I must decline to state its contents before its introduction.

Mr. JOSEPH DEVLIN: Will the right hon. Gentleman answer the latter part of the Question?

Mr. ATKINSON: My Answer covers that.

Mr. JOSEPH DEVLIN: When is the Bill likely to be brought in?

Mr. ATKINSON: I hope very shortly.

Irish National Education—Mr. Strong's Duties.

Mr. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what were the special duties on which Mr. Strong, senior inspector under the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, was engaged in the year 1903; and what is the exact position that this official occupies at present.

Mr. ATKINSON (for Mr. Walter Long): Mr. Strong has been employed at the central office upon special duties connected with the triennial grants of increment and the promotion of teachers under the new scheme. When not so employed, he still acts as senior inspector.

Training in Elementary Science for Irish Teachers.

Mr. MURPHY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state what action the Commissioners of National Education propose to take to supply the deficiency in the supply of expert instructors of science as pointed out by Mr. Connolly, inspector of the Killarney circuit, and several other inspectors of the Commissioners.

Mr. ATKINSON: It has already been stated that the Head Organiser and two assistants will permanently continue the training of teachers in elementary science, and that arrangements have been made for similar training at local technical schools. Instruction for King's scholars is provided for in the training colleges.

Wynn Estate, County Kerry.

Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that negotiations for the purchase of the Wynn Estate, Glenbeigh, county Kerry, were opened between the landlord's representatives and the tenants last summer; that it was decided by both parties that the sale should be conducted through the Congested Districts Board; that the negotiations have fallen through because of the interpretation put by the Board on Section 44 of the Land Act of 1903; and can he state whether the Board are entitled, after purchase from the owner of a congested estate, to sell to the tenants at a loss not exceeding 10 per cent.

Mr. ATKINSON: This estate has not been offered for sale to the Congested Districts Board. The section quoted does not apply to the operations of the Board, who in dealing with an estate may incur any loss which they may consider necessary.

Clifden Union Relief Works.

*Mr. O'MALLEY (Galway, Connemara): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that, in the Clifden Union, many of those destitute persons who are offered one shilling per day on the relief works have to walk several miles to those works, and that, in the case of Turbot Island, such persons are invited to come by boat to the mainland to obtain employment; and whether, in view of these facts and of the inadequacy of the measures adopted for the relief of exceptional distress, he will take some steps by which the remuneration will be increased, and the burden upon the poor ratepayers lightened.

Mr. ATKINSON: The guardians selected the most central situations for relief works. It would obviously be impossible to establish works adjacent to the residence of every person requiring relief. In the case of Turbot Island the names of three persons only were submitted for employment. It is not intended to increase the remuneration of the persons employed, or to enlarge the Government contribution of 75 per cent. towards the expenses of the works.

*MR. O'MALLEY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware some of these men have to walk seven or eight miles to the relief works?

MR. ATKINSON: Yes.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): When will the Works Bill be brought in so that we may have a discussion on the subject.

MR. ATKINSON: I hope soon after Easter.

Galway Relief Works.

*MR. O'MALLEY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the resolution passed by the Galway County Council requesting the Local Government Board to make an Order putting Section 13 of The Local Government Act, 1898, into operation in the electoral divisions of Kilcummin, Killanin, and Sellerna, for the purpose of relieving exceptional distress; whether he is aware that the Local Government Board notified to the guardians that they would be prepared to make the Order sought for on 3rd April, but subsequently declared that they would only contribute 50 per cent. of the cost of such works; and whether, in view of the fact that in the neighbouring union of Oughterard 75 per cent. of the cost is defrayed by the Government, he will take the necessary steps to see that on all these relief works the Government will make itself responsible for the 75 per cent. originally promised; and, if not, will he state upon what grounds there is a differentiation between the Government share of the cost of these works in the districts referred to and the Oughterard district.

MR. ATKINSON: The facts are as stated, save that at no time did the Government promise to contribute 75 per cent. of the relief expenditure in Galway union. The Government contributions are fixed according to the ability of each Union to bear the cost of relief measures. The valuation per head of the population in the Galway and Oughterard Unions is £1 17s. 7d. and 18s. 0d. respectively.

Newmarket (Cork) National School—Rule (127 b.)

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that Mr. J. D. Lynam, national school inspector, lately visited Newmarket (county Cork) male national school, and reported that he found the Rule 127 (b) broken by the enrolment of two children of under eight years of age on the 28th March, and that the teacher acted under the written directions of the manager; and, in view of his statement in this House in respect to postponement or possible withdrawal of said rule, he will say on whose authority Inspector Lynam made this report.

MR. ATKINSON: The report of the inspector, who is unwell and on leave of absence, has not yet been received. When he resumes duty the matter will be inquired into.

Adair Estate, Queen's County, Thomas Flanaghan's Claim.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether a claim for reinstatement has been received from Thomas Flanaghan, Clonaghadoe, who was evicted in 1884 from a holding on the Adair Estate, near Mountmellick, Queen's County; and, in view of the fact that the Estates Commissioners are at present in treaty for the purchase of the portion of the estate at present on the landlord's hands, can he say if Flanaghan's claim shall be considered, more particularly as the planter in occupation of Flanaghan's farm has come into possession since January 1st, 1901.

MR. ATKINSON: The estate in question has not come before the Commissioners. An application for reinstatement has been received from Flanaghan, and will be considered when opportunity arises.

Birr, King's County, Evicted Tenants.

MR. REDDY (King's County, Birr): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of applications for reinstatement received by the Estates Commissioners from evicted tenants in Birr Division, King's County; and how many have been restored to their old holdings or provided with equivalent farms elsewhere.

MR. ATKINSON: Statistics by Parliamentary constituencies are not available. Twenty-one applications have been received from evicted tenants in the Birr Poor Law Union, and, so far as the Commissioners are aware, none of these have been reinstated or otherwise provided with holdings.

Bird, Beamish, and Bandon Estates, Bantry.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork County, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what were the adjusted rents on the Bird, Beamish, and Bandon Estates, near Bantry, respectively, and poor valuations at the date of sale to the Congested Districts Board; what arrears were due of the tenants at that date, the number of non-judicial and second-term tenants of these estates: at what price each of these estates were purchased by the Congested Districts Board; and, seeing that a number of the holders on these estates are fishermen, and the fishing season will be in full swing about the middle of July, whether he will send an inspector from the Congested Districts Board to said estates at once to carry out the squaring of boundaries and general improvements.

MR. ATKINSON: To reply fully to this Question would necessitate reading out a long tabular statement. It will be more convenient, therefore, to furnish a printed reply with the Votes, and, with the hon. Member's permission, I will adopt that course.

White Estate, Bantry.

MR. GILHOOLY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. Lane, who was appointed inspector on the White Estate, near Bantry, is a member of the firm of solicitors who had the carriage of sale of said estate; and, if so, is the appointment in accordance with precedent.

MR. ATKINSON: Mr. Lane was not appointed inspector on this estate. Messrs. Guest, Lane & Co. were the solicitors having carriage of sale, but they were in no sense appointed by the Commissioners.

MR. GILHOOLY: I am informed Mr. Lane was the only person seen at the time of the inspection.

Kilmallock Labourers' Cottage Scheme.

MR. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland has the Local Government Board inspector who, some time last autumn, sat in Kilmallock, county Limerick, for the hearing of cases in the present scheme for the building of labourers' cottages yet given his decision; and, if so, how many has he recommended for building; will he say, in case the recommendations have been made, how many altogether, including these and all the other cottages previously built under the Labourers Acts, can be numbered for the union of Kilmallock; how many in a similar way all told for the Tipperary No. 2 District Council and Tipperary Union; how many for No. 2 Mitchelstown District Council and Mitchelstown Union; how many for Croom Union; and how many for Limerick Union.

MR. ATKINSON: The Board's inspector has reported in favour of the building of 125 additional cottages in the Kilmallock rural district. This will bring the total number of cottages in the Kilmallock Union to 990. The number of cottages already built, or being built, in Tipperary Union is 436, of which 129 are situated in Tipperary No. 2 rural district; the number for Mitchelstown Union is 258, of which 102 are situated in Mitchelstown No. 2 rural district; the number for Croom Union is 281, and for Limerick Union 593.

Seed Potato Loans—Manorhamilton Board of Guardians' Request.

Mr. P. A. McHUGH (Leitrim, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Manorhamilton Board of Guardians requested the Local Government Board to sanction an additional loan for the purchase of seed potatoes, and that the Local Government Board refused to give their sanction; and that the Bill recently introduced dealing with distress in Ireland gives power to the Local Government Board to sanction loans up to the 1st September, 1905; and, if so, in view of the hardship and loss that will result from the refusal of the Local Government Board to sanction the loan, will he direct that Board to reconsider its decision.

Mr. ATKINSON: By public notice issued on 12th December last, the 15th February was fixed as the latest date for receiving applications for loans, and this date was subsequently extended to 11th March. The guardians, therefore, received ample notice. Their application for a supplemental loan was a fortnight late. It is not intended to entertain further applications.

The Civil Service—Case of Mr. Follet Jones.

Mr. P. A. McHUGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. Follet Jones, of 7, Clarinda Park, Kingstown, county Dublin, an official employed in the office of the registrar of petty sessions clerks, Dublin Castle, acts as agent on the estate of Mr. Colville Jones, near Grange, county Sligo; if so, is it consistent with Mr. Follet Jones's duty as a Civil servant to act as a land agent; and can he say how many days Mr. Jones was absent from his duty in May and November last in connection with the discharge of his functions as land agent.

Mr. ATKINSON: The Answer to the first inquiry is in the affirmative. Mr. Follet Jones is brother to the owner of this property, and a younger son, I believe, of the late owner; and he himself has a family charge upon the property. Mr. Jones acts as agent over this family property during his ordinary leave of absence. He was absent from duty in this connection for four days in November last, but not at all in May last. There is nothing in Mr. Jones's action which contravenes the rules under which he serves.

Dickson Estate, County Leitrim.

Mr. P. A. McHUGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that congestion of an exceptional character prevails on the Dickson Estate, at Tawley, in the county of Leitrim, and that twenty-seven occupiers of agricultural holdings in Tawley occupy holdings the annual valuations of which are £1 or under; and whether, in view of the tracts of grazing lands adjoining these holdings and of the intention of Parliament in passing the Land Act of 1903, any effort will be made by the Irish Government to have the farms of those tenants enlarged and improved.

Mr. ATKINSON: Proceedings in regard to this estate are being taken under the 40th Section of the Act of 1896, and any application in the matter by the parties interested should be addressed to the Land Judge.

Colville Jones Estate, County Sligo.

Mr. P. A. McHUGH: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that several tenants on the Colville Jones Estate, near Grange, county Sligo, who paid each a year's rent in November last and served notice to have their rents revised in the Land Courts, are now being proceeded against, some for the hanging gale and some for arrears which have been running on for ten or fifteen years; and whether, in view of the poverty of these tenants, and of the fact that they occupy small patches of land in a congested area, and of the distress prevailing on this estate at the present time, he can take steps to prevent the execution of decrees that may be obtained against tenants who have paid a year's rent within the past twelve months.

Mr. ATKINSON: I have no information on this subject. The matter is not one in which the Executive could interfere.

County Longford Evicted Tenants.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether in the case of the sales of the tenants' interests in grazing farms in county Longford, which had been previously purchased under the Ashbourne Act, the Estates Commissioners have power to buy in such farms; and, if not, whether, seeing that, owing to the scarcity of untenanted land in the county, these farms offer almost the only chance that will arise for providing new or equivalent holdings for the evicted tenants, eighty-six of whose applications are on the books of the Estates Commissioners, he will propose any legislation to extend the Land Act of 1903 so as to include these farms as farms that can be bought by the Estates Commissioners for this purpose.

Mr. ATKINSON: The Estates Commissioners have no power to make advances for the purchase from peasant proprietors of the holdings purchased by the latter until the purchase annuities charged on the holdings have been paid or redeemed.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: When are these evicted tenants going to get back to the land?

Mr. ATKINSON was understood to say he hoped there would be no long delay.

Labourers Acts—Unexpended Balances.

Mr. LUNDON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland will he lay upon the Table of the House a Return for the various counties of Ireland of the amount of unexpended balances of the Exchequer grant where the apportioned sums have not been utilised; and is he prepared to introduce at any future time legislation to enable district councils, where the shilling in the pound on the valuation shall have been expended, to add the second half acre to the one already occupied by the labourers.

Mr. ATKINSON: The information asked for in the first part of the Question will be found on page 264 of the Annual Report of the Local Government Board for 1903–4. Having regard to the many other charges falling on the poor rates, it is not considered desirable to increase the existing rating power for the purposes of the Labourers Acts.

Untenanted Lands in County Limerick.

Mr. LUNDON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what progress has been made within the past four months in the sale of the untenanted lands of the Synans in Carnane Fedamore, county Limerick: have the solicitors having carriage of sale, or the incumbrancers, made any offer through the Chancery Court to sell to the Estates Commissioners for the division of the lands to the people in the congested area around, or, pending such, is the receiver making preparation to let the lands for meadowing purposes to those who want meadowing in the immediate vicinity.

Mr. ATKINSON: This estate has not been offered for sale to the Estates Commissioners. I am informed that the petition for sale was only received by the Land Judge in February last, and that the Conditional Order for sale has not yet been made absolute. The untenanted land referred to in the last part of the Question has been let for the present season.

County Antrim and Belfast Crown Solicitorships.

Mr. JOSEPH DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is proposed to amalgamate the offices of Crown Solicitor for county Antrim and Crown Solicitor for Belfast; and, if so, what economies will be effected thereby.

Mr. ATKINSON: The question of amalgamating these offices is under consideration; and, until it is decided, the latter inquiry cannot be answered.

Belfast Courthouse.

Mr. JOSEPH DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a resolution passed by the Belfast Merchants' and Manufacturers' Association at their meeting on

March 30th, with reference to the condition of the Belfast Courthouse; and, if so, will he say what action he proposes to take to carry out the alterations and improvements demanded by the Judges, jurors, and all concerned in the administration of the law in Belfast.

Mr. ATKINSON: I have seen a newspaper report of the proceedings at the meeting referred to. The question of altering and improving the Courthouse is one for the local authorities, who are bound to make adequate arrangements for the administration of justice.

Government Regulations for Guidance of Irish Estates' Commissioners.

Mr. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland when the regulations issued by the Irish Government for the guidance of the Estates Commissioners will be laid upon the Table.

Mr. ATKINSON: I should hope at an early date.

Evicted Tenants—Government Instructions to the Estates Commissioners.

Mr. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether there are now in existence any instructions from the Irish Government controlling the action of the Estates Commissioners in the work of reinstating evicted tenants or in any other department of their work; and, if so, under what section and sub-section of the Act of 1903 they have been issued; and why have they not been communicated to the House.

Mr. ATKINSON: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by my right hon. friend to a similar Question on the 20th March†. That reply was to the effect that my right hon. friend the Member for Dover had stated on the 20th February‡ that no regulations of the character mentioned in Section 23, Subsection 8, of the Act had been made, but that communications of a Departmental and confidential character had passed between him and the Commissioners.

Mr. DILLON: But do these confidential communications control the action of the Commissioners in carrying out their work, and, if so, why in fulfilment of the pledge given by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover are they not communicated to the House?

Mr. ATKINSON: I have said they do not come under that pledge.

Mr. DILLON: Then I shall raise this question at the earliest possible moment.

British and Irish Taxation Comparisons.

Mr. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state what percentage proportions of revenue derived from direct and indirect taxes respectively bear to the total revenue of Ireland and Great Britain taken separately.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.): In the financial year 1903–4—the latest for which the figures are available—the proportions of tax revenue derived from direct and indirect taxes in Great Britain and Ireland respectively are estimated to have been—

	Direct Taxes.	Indirect Taxes.
Great Britain	50·6 per cent.	49·4 per cent.
Ireland	27·8 per cent.	72·2 per cent.

It must not be inferred from these proportions that Irishmen contribute more either to direct or indirect taxation than Englishmen or Scotchmen. The amounts contributed per head were—

	Direct.			Indirect.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Great Britain	1	11	4	1	10	7
Ireland		10	10	1	8	3

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): Does that include money raised by the Exchequer on the Local Taxation Account?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I think it does.

Mr. O'MARA: Does the right hon. Gentleman consider a system of taxation fair under which the Irish people pay 72 per cent. of indirect taxation?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! That is a matter of opinion.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxliii., 466.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cxli., 609.

Tea Duty in England and Ireland.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer to state the amount of duty actually paid on tea in Ireland during the year ending 31st March last; how much tea was cleared at London or English ports, and what duty it brought in; and whether, having regard to the admitted over-taxation of Ireland, he could sanction a sliding scale in Ireland differentiating between the cheaper and dearer qualities of tea.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The amount of duty paid on tea in Ireland during the year ended 31st March last was £436,755. The clearances of tea for home consumption and the amount of duty collected thereon, for the same period, in London and in other ports and places in England, were as follows:—

	Clearances.	Amount of duty collected.
	lbs.	£
London	226,278,662	7,451,369
Other ports and places in England.	4,748,179	155,527

For reasons which I gave in a speech in this House the day before yesterday, I do not propose to introduce a sliding scale of tea duties; nor, considering the general quality of teas used in Ireland, does it seem clear that any advantage would accrue to that country from so doing.

Balbriggan Harbour.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the condition of Balbriggan Harbour; whether any representations on the subject have reached the Board of Works from the Dublin Port and Docks Board; and whether he can hold out any hope that a Government dredger will be employed at an early date to prevent the harbour in question from becoming entirely useless owing to the accumulation of mud and sand both in the harbour and at its mouth.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: This harbour is under the control of the Dublin Port and Docks Board, and no representations have been received from that Board by the Commissioners of Public Works. I understand that the dredger referred to is engaged for the whole of the current year.

MR. CLANCY: If representations are made by the Harbour Board will the dredger be sent?

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: Of course any representations will be considered, but the dredger is engaged for the whole of this year.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): Where is the Galway dredger just now?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Galway Mill Stream.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what action has been taken by the Board of Works in connection with the letter addressed to the Chief Secretary on February 4th, 1905, by the Galway Millers' Trustees, in reference to the record of levels of water for the supply of the Galway mills, and to the leakage of water through the Ferryland embankment.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: The action taken by the Board of Works was to furnish the Chief Secretary with information as to the statements made by the writer of the letter referred to. These statements were founded upon misapprehension of the facts. No mention was made in the letter of leakage of water through the Ferryland embankment. The Board of Works are informed that slight leakages do take place there, but that they have hardly any effect in diminishing the supply of water to the mills. The works are not under the charge of the Board of Works but of the Lough Corrib District Drainage Trustees.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN: Has the Board of Works any control over these trustees?

MR. ATKINSON: I do not think it opportune to state their relations.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN: But have they any power at all?

MR. ATKINSON: I answered that on a previous occasion.

New College of Science, Dublin.

MR. NANNETTI: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, as representing the Board of Works, whether any appointment has been made of clerk of works in connection with the building of the proposed College of Science in Dublin; if so, to whom has this appointment been given; by whom was the appointment made; and whether such appointment is for a portion of the work only.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: The only appointment of a clerk of works has been made by the Board of Works in connection with a special contract for the removal of old buildings from the site of the proposed college and for the excavation of its foundations. The name of the gentleman appointed is Mr. J. A. Lawrie.

MR. NANNETTI: Could not a competent Irishman have been found?

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH; I understand they appointed the man who was most suitable for the post.

MR. NANNETTI: We had a promise that employment for Irishmen only would be found on this work.

Overflow of the River Riffey.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he has yet caused any memorial to be prepared for the formation of a drainage board for the district of Cam and Clonwhelan, in which periodic floodings occur owing to the overflow of the River Riffey; and, if not, can he indicate the nature of the steps which should now be taken to get this board set up.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: I would refer the hon. Member to the full Answer I gave to his Question on this subject on February 28th.† The persons desiring to form a drainage district will be informed of the proper steps to be taken on application to the Board of Works.

Irish Postmasters Private Earnings.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if the commission for emigration agency paid to postmasters in Ireland is taken into account in fixing the salaries of these officials; and, further, will he state what would be the average amount received for acting as emigration agent, and from what source this money is derived.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): The commission received for emigration agencies is not taken into account in fixing the salaries of postmasters and sub-postmasters in Ireland. I am not aware what is the average amount received for acting as emigration agent, or from what source the money is derived.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: Will the noble Lord make inquiry?

LORD STANLEY: No. I do not think the hon. Member would like me to inquire into the sources of his private income, and I do not see why I should inquire into those of other people.

Irish Provident Assurance Company.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he is aware that a number of policy holders in the Irish Provident Assurance Company have been refused all information as to the *status*, liabilities, and nature of securities held by the said company for their protection and the discharge of liabilities guaranteed by them; whether any information as to the *status* of this company is in possession of the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies or Friendly Societies; and, if so, will he cause a Return to be made giving such information for the benefit of these policy holders.

MR. BONAR LAW: I am not aware of the circumstances to which the hon. Member refers. The company in question is registered under the Companies Acts, but is not registered as a Friendly Society. The returns deposited by the company under the Companies Acts may be inspected at the Dublin Registry by any person on the payment of the prescribed fee. I may add, as I stated in reply to a Question recently asked by the hon. Member for West Kerry, that a question has arisen as to the liability of the company to render returns under the Life Assurance Companies Acts, and the matter is under the consideration of the Irish Law Officers.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxli., 1490.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: If the policy holders of the company are dissatisfied with its management and believe it is conducted on fraudulent principles, can the hon. Gentleman's Department interfere?

MR. BONAR LAW: We have no powers other than those I have named in my Answer.

Agricultural Rating Bill.

SIR CARNE RASCH: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Tithe Rent-Charge will be included in the Agricultural Rating Bill.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): Yes, Sir.

Scottish Church Dispute.

MR. CHARLES DOUGLAS (Lanarkshire, N.W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, in view of legal proceedings in Scotland in relation to church property the ultimate disposal of which is under investigation by a Royal Commission, whether the Government propose to allow the present results of such proceedings to affect the final distribution of the property.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not presume to pass any judgment on the action of either of the two Churches concerned; but I am perfectly ready to express my deliberate opinion, which is the opinion of the Government, that nothing that has taken place in this interim period ought to affect the final decision that is come to in regard to the matters in dispute.

Defence Against Invasion.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to his statement that the Committee of Defence are clearly of opinion that invasion of these islands in such force as to inflict a fatal blow or threaten our independence is impossible, he proposes to prepare any scheme for repelling invasion.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have already indicated to an hon. and gallant friend that I should favour all Questions on this subject being put off until after the debate on the Vote connected with the Committee of Imperial Defence which I propose to bring on at no distant day after Easter.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): Has the right hon. Gentleman any further statement to make as to the business of the House?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I propose to take first on Monday the Second Reading of the Agricultural Rating Bill, and as the second order Ways and Means Report. I do not propose in any event, however, to initiate a discussion on Ways and Means Report after 12 o'clock, nor do I think it at all desirable to have a late sitting to deal with it on Monday. On Tuesday the Unemployed Bill and the Aliens Bill will be introduced, under what is called "the ten minutes rule," to be followed by the Report stage of the Budget Resolutions. At the afternoon sitting on Wednesday I propose to take the Motion for the adjournment for the Easter holidays.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): Can the right hon. Gentleman say what will be the first business immediately after the holiday?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope to give an Answer to that Question on Monday.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Does the right hon. Gentleman intend to dispose of Ways and Means on the Budget Resolutions before Easter?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I think it very desirable to do so in the interests of public business.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: When does the right hon. Gentleman intend to take his Motion with reference to debates on adjournments? Will it be before Easter, and, if so, when?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It is down on the Paper for to-day, and the House will have an opportunity of passing it if it is unopposed.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Oh, I shall oppose it.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Then it will not be taken before Easter.

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.

First Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Army (Annual) Bill, without Amendment.

SUPPLY (CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES).

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair (for Committee on Civil Services and Revenue Departments Estimates)."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

Mr. MURPHY (Kerry, E.) proposed "That, in the opinion of this House, the provision for Universities is totally inadequate, and none can be regarded as equitable which does not secure for the Catholics of Ireland equally with other members of the community facilities for University education without violence to their religious feelings." It was, he said, seldom that a Motion could be sustained by proofs from all sections of the community and all kinds of religious and political opinions. The mass of evidence was so great that the difficulty was rather in compressing it than in producing it. He was sorry to say, however, that it did not follow from this condition of things that it would be accepted or anything done in connection with it by the present Government. He regretted, therefore, that under the circumstances the ways of the ballot, which, like other things and men, were peculiar, should have given him the duty of opening the discussion. He knew that it could be done more effectively by many of his colleagues. He was consoled, however, by the knowledge that the hon. Member for East Mayo was back with them once again and that he and others would raise the debate to the level that it ought to occupy.

There was a time when he was not greatly enthusiastic about this question of University education. He was concerned more with the foundations of education and thought little of the superstructure or covering. That feeling arose, of course, from the fact that he considered the class in which he was most concerned were touched mainly by primary education, and his desire would be still to make that education, in the interests of the nation, the teachers, and all concerned, as efficient and full as it ought to be, and as it was not. But the truth had long since been borne in upon him that this question of University education was a question for the entire people also, and every month that passed by confirmed that opinion. He had not had the advantages of a University education himself owing to lack of opportunity. But perhaps that made him feel all the more keenly and bitterly the disadvantages suffered by those who were deprived of it. Thousands of his Catholic fellow-countrymen were deprived of it by the utter incapacity of British government in Ireland. If it were true, as it was, that superior education drew a line between those who profited by it and those who were uneducated as marked as that between the living and the dead, then it was clear that higher education in its proper form was something worthy of consideration if they desired to keep their nation alive. He did not put it forward that higher education would secure all ends, because he had a strong view that it changed the size and not the sort of the intellect. The amount of it could never give ability where nature had not laid the foundations. But just as the rough-hewn steel might possess the qualities necessary for strength and utility, yet skill and training was necessary to enable it to be well used as a heavy hammer or a necessary needle, the skill and training necessary to utilise the intellects of the youth of Ireland were withheld by the methods of the Government in Ireland.

Ireland had education as an ornament in the prosperity of the sixth, seventh, and eight centuries, when, as Dr. Johnson said, she was known as "the school of the West, the habitation of sanctity and learning." British rule in the country, however, killed education, which would have been a refuge in the adversity which followed on it. Some of those who heard this debate, and others who would not listen to the arguments, though they would be ready to vote down the demand, might deny that statement. But it was not so long ago when it was a felony to teach in Ireland. So late as 1901 the Protestant Bishop of Cork prosecuted a Catholic teacher who opened a school in the county. Mr. Porter, in his "Progress of the Nation," told them that the most determined opposition to the system of national education as they styled it, came from the Protestant clergy in 1843. Their policy as to education in Ireland was firstly exclusiveness, then an attempt to denationalise the people by means of a false system, and then pretended reforms under which they opened up Trinity College to Catholics under conditions impossible to their religion and nationality. The people wanted a seat of universal learning, as a University should be, and the Government gave them Trinity College. It was a hot-bed of Protestantism and anti-Nationalism.

Minister after Minister had admitted the necessity for reform, but all their efforts had been failures. Disraeli was a failure with his Royal University in 1873 as much as he was in 1868. Mr. Gladstone, in 1873, and in the Home Rule Bill of 1886, tried but without success. Sir M. Hicks Beach, in 1885, told them that "next year something would be done," but the promise never fructified any more than the more definite pledge of the First Lord of the Treasury made in the debate of 1889. Years passed by and a Commission was appointed which reported in 1903, in terms favourable to the demands of the Catholics, but nothing more substantial had yet resulted than the flying of a kite by Lord Dunraven, who, during a portion of the period of office of the late Chief Secretary, constituted himself stage manager of the Irish Government. They all regretted the absence of the right hon. Gentleman, though many of them could never appreciate the double shuffle indulged in between the Member for Dover and the Chief Secretary for Ireland on this and other matters. The result of it all was that the Irish people were deceived and justice denied to them in this most important matter. And that had happened too, although all their Lord-Lieutenants, all their Chief Secretaries, even Mr. Lecky and the Solicitor-General, Members for Trinity College itself, every liberal-minded man in the country, and lastly, their own Prime Minister, had again and again declared that something should be done to meet the legitimate aspirations of Irish Catholics in the matter of University education. How the Prime Minister could reconcile his statements in the debate of 1899, and his speech at Partick in December of that year, in which he said "that we ought to give Catholics a thoroughly equipped College," with his inaction in the matter in all the intervening years, passed comprehension. But he supposed anything was possible to one who viewed with an equable mind the operations of a Birmingham tiger and a Greenwich sleuth-hound, and who did nothing to restrain them in the interests of all the unoffending people near by. When the Prime Minister spoke in 1897, he said he—

> "Was contriving a University that shall meet the approval or be largely used by those classes of the Roman Catholic population who now refuse to take advantage of the existing institution."

He begged of them all to lay aside sectarian prejudices, and he expressed the desire to set up either a college or a University for the Catholics of Ireland that would compare favourably with similar institutions on both sides of St. George's

Channel. Apparently he was still contriving, still desiring, as he had done nothing in the interval. In the following year's debate he had proof of the united desire of all Parties to do justice to the claims of Irish Catholics. There was complete harmony in the band of Ministers and Members from all sides who spoke in support of the claim, and the harmony was not broken appreciably, because the triangle and trombone in the shape of the Member for Thirsk or one of the Members for Lincolnshire were unable to play the tune.

Need he seek to prove once again the case against Trinity College? It was Protestant and anti-National. Lord Justice Fitzgibbon, speaking within its walls in 1891, a man who was closely connected with the University, said—

> "Their University was founded by Protestants for Protestants and in the Protestant interest. A Protestant spirit had from the first animated the body corporate. At the present moment the guardian spirit of the place was Protestant, and as a Protestant he said, and he said it boldly, Protestant might it evermore remain."

The Prime Minister had declared that if it was Catholic as much as it was Protestant, it would be a very dangerous place for Protestants to send their sons to. A similar declaration was made by Dean Jellet at the Tercentenary of the College in 1893. To do justice to Lord Justice Fitzgibbon, however, it should be stated that when making the declaration he had mentioned he also said—

> "That if Trinity were to be made safe from disturbance it should rest on the foundation of justice, and that could only be laid by the State providing for others what Queen Elizabeth and King James provided for that place."

The result, therefore, of this condition of Trinity, was that the Catholic people of Ireland, which really meant the Irish nation, were deprived of University education.

The Member for South Derry told them last year that what was wanted was an improvement below the University but above the ordinary school level. Whilst he agreed that such improvement was necessary, he could not at all agree that University facilities were not also required. The statistics in the matter of secondary education in Ireland showed that in the middle grade 277 Catholics won exhibitions and 2,977 passed in the years 1892–1901, while in the case of Protestants, including all other denominations, the numbers were 142 and 1,598, respectively. In the senior grade the Catholics won 110 exhibitions and 1,346 passed, while the Protestants were only eighty-one and 687 respectively. Owing to present conditions, most of these young Catholics were deprived of a University course. In the Report of the Royal Commission they found that—

> "They (Catholics) have at their command great educational ability, and, in some cases, genuine love of learning."

But the destruction of it was effected as far as they were able to do so. The Government wasted thousands on their absurd Queen's Colleges and Royal University, sufficient to effect the change that everyone regarded as necessary. Carlyle once said that—

> "The true University in those days was a collection of books."

Though they might doubt the statement they must be thankful that this delay and denial of justice had not closed up all the founts of knowledge to the Irish people. The Government tried to kill their religion, but the days of the golden priests and the wooden chalices were days in which the simple faith of their fathers was indestructibly fixed in the hearts of the Irish people. They tried to kill their nationality, but, though they struck down the people at home by every species of tyranny, like the wild creeping flowers, their children sprang up in every land until they had an Irish nation now whose limits and powers were larger than their own. They tried to destroy the hall-mark of their nationality, but out of its own ashes the Irish language had revived, and the possibilities of the revival were greater than any of them could estimate.

Did they want to have their claim stated once again. Equality was at once its high-water mark and its low-water mark. They wanted what the late Chief Secretary said last year was reasonable—

> "A college coloured by the faith of the majority using it."

They asked for no glorified seminary for Catholics alone. They demanded that which, in the next place, perhaps, to self-government alone, would raise up their poor country to their own great advantage and to the loss of no other people—a place the name of which would be associated with liberty, progress, and enlightenment, as well as with Catholic faith and Celtic tradition. Some people laid down the plans on which they might secure it. A few there were who would have them advise entrance to Trinity as the best solution. What would be thought of the wisdom of a general who would lead his troops through a dismal swamp without counting his losses likely to be incurred, the years necessary to cover the way, or the net result when he got to the end. In any case they could not wait for years. The question was too pressing and important and must be pushed. And moreover, though Daniel came unhurt from the lion's den, it did not follow at all that Timothy and James and John and Michael would do so. They wanted that their intellects and religion should be emancipated and given a fair chance. Though justice might be blind for a long time, and wink for a little time, she would at last show the way in which their demands should be met when their merits were conceded. A Committee at present sitting recommended the granting of an additional £100,000 a year to English colleges, and they would get it. A far lesser sum would meet Irish requirements, and they must get it. It was no mere begging matter at all. It was merely restitution for the ruined homes and pillaged shrines of Ireland in the past. The Irish people were adopting the policy of the Bishop of Kerry, who said the other day—

> "Let there be no truckling with persons who have little sympathy with our wants or aspirations. Have confidence in ourselves. If education is to be raised up from the low depths into which it has fallen it will not be any backstairs influence, but by an honest intelligent union amongst ourselves."

The modern Irish battle-cry would be "Sinn fein, Sinn fein amain." By adopting that policy they must and would succeed. England framed and endowed Trinity College as an exclusively Protestant institution. Its traditions, governing body, teachers, and all connected with it were Protestant. They must therefore do for the majority what they had done for the minority. In spite of all drawbacks nearly ninety per cent. of the population in Ireland could now read and write. They should make a ladder reaching from the lowest point to the highest University position up which every child should have the power of climbing as far as he could go. They had given a Charter to a University for Catholics in Quebec. Why deny one to the Catholics of Ireland? Conservatives demanded denominational education in England. They denied it to Ireland. On one side they consulted the Church of England in educational matters in this country. On the other side they desired that the Free Churches should also be consulted. But they would not consult or act on the advice of the Catholic Church, which was the Church of Ireland, truly, in educational matters.

Last year it was shown, on the authority of the Archbishop of Dublin, that no reasonable scheme would be refused. This year they wanted to know from the Prime Minister (1.) If after the many promises made by himself and others he now proposed any scheme to meet the legitimate demands of the Irish people. (2.) If not, would he accept a scheme framed by those representing them and take steps to have it carried into operation. (3.) And if no Answer was forthcoming to either of those Questions would he provide an opportunity to enable the House of Commons, independent of Party, to come to a decision on this question? These were simple Questions and they ought to receive a plain Answer to them. When the Moseley Commission was sent to America it was agreed on as a general principle that schools to be effective must be adapted to the particular needs of the community. The English were so proud of their superiority that they desired that circumstances should adapt themselves to them instead of sensibly adapting themselves to circumstances. Ultimately they must do that in this matter as they had had to do in others in Ireland. The other day the President of the United States said—

> "Men of Irish blood are doing their full share towards the artistic and literary development of our country. I hope that an earnest effort will be made in American Universities to endow chairs for the study of Celtic literature and the research in Celtic antiquities."

When would they make that earnest effort in Ireland? The world was all gates and opportunities for the educated man, but they closed them all up to Irish men and women as far as they could. Their demand that evening was for the creation of an intellectual headquarters for the faith, the nationality, the language, and the literature of Ireland. They might not receive it now, but it must come. Every necessary effort at reform in Ireland had been again and again repulsed, but finally had had to be recognised. This effort also must be recognised. All through the darkness and sorrow of the past they had been enabled by the strength of hope to follow the kindly light of hope beckoning them onward to the goal. And they would follow it still, confident in the belief that some day it would bring them to a time when the Island of Saints and Scholars would wear the laurel wreath of happiness which the educated intellects of her children would fashion with loving care to place upon her brow.

*Mr. HAVILAND BURKE (King's County, Tullamore) said he felt that when his colleagues in the Irish party invited him to second the Resolution so ably moved by his hon. friend, they had conferred upon him an honourable but a great responsibility. And he thought he should best fulfil his task by leaving many arguments and details to his Catholic colleagues far more competent than himself to present them to the House. His position was simply that he supported the Resolution from an absolutely non-Catholic point of view, and with a belief that it would, if carried, remove from the arena of controversy a social grievance and an educational injustice which tended to maintain bad blood between the Protestants and the Catholics in Ireland. He was, he believed, only one of many Protestants in Ireland who were not always talking about their Protestantism, who were not always putting Questions on the Notice Paper of the House with a view to wound the feelings of their Catholic fellow-countrymen; who did not believe in the doctrines or submit to the discipline of the Catholic Church, but who were in no way in sympathy with the Orange Party, and who wanted, on the contrary, to live to see the day when it should be absolutely impossible for an Irish Catholic to be able to say, with any reasonable show of justice, that he was subject to any educational, social, or political disadvantage as compared with his Protestant fellow-countryman. One of the greatest of writers, Thomas Carlyle, once said that we should not be so anxious to see through people as to see out of them—to endeavour to see with their eyes, to hear with their ears, to feel with their feelings in regard to any great public question. That was what he tried to do in regard to the case of the claim for a University for the Catholics of Ireland.

They probably would be told in the course of the debate, what had been said a hundred times over so far as Trinity College was concerned, that there was no actual disability imposed on Irish Catholics; that they were not compelled to attend religious celebrations other than their own, and that the degrees and fellowships were open to them on equal terms with their Protestant fellow-students. If he were living in some country where the people were overwhelmingly Catholic, and the only available University was Catholic, he would have no hesitation in going to it and getting every possible advantage out of it; but if that country were overwhelmingly Protestant, he would consider the Protestants to be labouring under a grave social injustice if they had no University of their own, and were compelled—if they went to a University at all—to attend one in which the Roman Catholic religion was the only religion officially recognised, practised, and taught. Attempts had been made to prejudice discussion by representing the demand for a Catholic University as an artificial grievance worked up by Catholic ecclesiastics for the furtherance of their own designs. He thought that argument very unreasonable and unfair. Surely, if there were no teaching University for Irish Protestants, their Bishops and clergy would be in the vanguard of any movement to secure it. That would be their proper and natural place, and he would think it grossly impertinent for any Catholic to tell him that he did not really want a Protestant University; that he only made speeches and signed petitions for it because he was told to do so by the parsons, and that the Protestant Primate and Bishops merely wanted a new toy to play with, and that the people were merely subservient tools for carrying on an agitation. They had never been secularists in education in Ireland. Irish Protestants themselves had always maintained the importance of the connection between religion and education. If they looked at the long list of secondary schools in Great Britain and Ireland, given in Whittaker's Almanac, they would see that the Protestant clergy had an immense influence in education. In England itself, the headmasterships of all the great public schools were virtually monopolised by the clergy of the Established Church. Was it rational —was it not rather the height of absurdity, to argue as if the Catholic Prelates of Ireland ought to take a back seat in a Catholic University movement? It was absolutely monstrous and unfair, and such an argument in a similar case in this country would not be treated seriously for a moment. All he could say with regard to the prominent part taken by the Catholic Bishops in this matter was that to his mind it was their best defence to the charge made so often, and he thought unjustly, against them that they were what was called obscurantists, that they were mediæval, that they had no notion of modern progress. If the Catholic Bishops of Ireland were anxious to close the gates of knowledge against their people, a University, even if absolutely under their own control, would be about the very last thing in the world they would ask for. A University was not a seminary. No rules, however strict, no supervision, however vigilant, could prevent young college men from coming together and discussing the great problems of this world and the next with one another, and of having access to books expressing very conflicting views in matters both of religion and of science; and if the Catholic Bishops asked for a Catholic University it seemed to him that they showed confidence not only in themselves but confidence in their people, and confidence that the Irish faith, which had survived the plunder, the cruelty, and the injustice of centuries, would not be shattered at a blow by the diffusion of modern learning amongst its children.

Some complaints had been made, and some Questions on the Notice Paper seemed to hint, that the Catholics in Ireland were taking the aggressive too much just now and were inclined to carry the war into the enemy's country—that they were inclined in some directions to put up the notice as regarded elective public positions that "no Protestant need apply." He did not believe that any such policy existed on the part of any responsible body of Irish Catholics, lay or ecclesiastical. If it did, he for one honestly could not cast the first stone at them. He could not honestly deny that Catholics in Ireland had received about every provocation that human perversity could possibly inflict. When it was complained that this demand for a Catholic University was a sort of Papal aggression, an attack upon Protestantism by Irish Catholics, he was reminded of the story of the man who knocked his enemy down and was kicking him to death, and yet was shrieking aloud for help the whole time. When asked why he was calling for assistance, the assailant replied, "He is trying to get up, he is trying to get up." In the same way there were some people in Ireland who had so long been cocks of the Orange walk that they were amazed that the Catholic should have the audacity, the sheer impudence, to make any demand of any kind whatever for the furtherance of the religion or education of his own people. He thought that, on the whole, this Catholic demand had been advanced with great dignity and moderation. Of course every cause had its injudicious advocates. It was very possible they might rake up things said or written by Catholics that might have been better left unsaid or unwritten, but Irish Catholicism was not the only cause that suffered at the hands of injudicious advocates. For instance, at the time of the great fight against the disestablishment of the Church in Ireland, one prominent Orangeman said that if her late Majesty gave her assent to that Bill her crown would be kicked into the Boyne. Another prominent Orangeman, he believed he was the Grand Chaplain of the Orange Order, declared at an immense meeting in the Rotunda that the reason why he opposed the disestablishment of the Irish Church was that he honestly and firmly believed that the soul of the Roman Catholic would be everlastingly damned. It was therefore a very dangerous thing to attempt to oppose a cause of any kind by showing that its advocates here and there might not have exhibited the reserve of the trained controversialist.

He proposed to deal with one or two of the stock arguments against the establishment of a Catholic University. First they had what he might call the Oxford argument. They were told that the Catholics in England were allowed to go to Oxford under certain regulations. Why should not the Catholic Church in Ireland make similar arrangements whereby its sons could go to Trinity College? He wished to point out that Oxford was not a centre of anti-Catholic activity. The heads of Oxford University did not publish ferocious anti-Catholic poetry in college magazines. Oxford was not the centre of perennial political intrigue against the religion or the political aspirations of its Catholic students. In England, Catholics were not a big majority as in Ireland, but were a small minority, and they could go to Oxford without the slightest loss of personal dignity. Then they were told, and it sounded very plausible at first, that if the Irish Catholic Bishops were to assent to a certain number of picked Catholic young men entering their names on the books of Trinity College every year, in the course of time the Catholics would not only enjoy a position of great power in Trinity College, but possibly a position of equality and even of numerical predominance within its walls. But it was only fair that they should realise the fact that an Irish Catholic Bishop did not occupy the position of a general who in the crisis of some great battle resolved to sacrifice thousands of his best troops in order to capture a vitally important position. The position of the Catholic Bishops was that not for all the honours and emoluments of Trinity College should the faith of the humblest Catholic lad in the whole of Ireland be imperilled. If they knew that at the end of ten years they would have Trinity College in the hollow of their hand they were not entitled from their own point of view to run the risk of one Catholic lad having his faith weakened within its walls.

There was another reason upon which he based his support of this Resolution. He thought monopoly was in itself a bad thing, and Trinity College had a monopoly in the matter of University education in Ireland. It would be a good rather than a bad thing for Trinity College itself that it should be roused from its educational slumbers. With the competition of a good University, not closed against Protestants if they chose to avail themselves of its opportunities, he thought that the whole system of education in Trinity College would be brought more up to date, more up to modern needs, and that it would be more of a teaching University in the true sense of the word, and less of what it threatened to become—a factory for the manufacture of parsons. It was notorious that the numbers of students on the books of Trinity College had been dwindling for years past. The Irish Protestant landed gentry very largely boycotted Trinity College, and the son of an Irish Peer at that College was about as rare as a white blackbird. There was not one now on the books. In addition to all this, Trinity College had made itself impossible for a man holding strong Nationalist convictions. It was little better in Ireland than a standing committee for the Unionist Party. It was a centre of intrigue against everything that was Catholic and Nationalist in the country. It had not even justified the theory of University representation—the theory that specially enlightened communities should have specially enlightened representatives in that House. With very few exceptions, what had the representation of Trinity College come to? It was the appanage of members of the legal profession bitterly opposed to the majority of the Irish people, and who wanted a seat in Parliament as an ante-chamber to a seat on the Bench. During a recent Parliamentary contest for Trinity College the bitter remark was made by its respected and beloved Regius Professor of Divinity, Dr. Gwynn, that its Members of Parliament were too often little better than King William's statue on College Green, with their backs turned to the college and their faces to the Castle. He would not quote from the speeches of politicians on this subject, for the modern politician had an aptitude for eating his own words with a relish just as he would eat his dinner. But he would like to refer to a speech made by Lady Londonderry in opening some Church schools at Sunderland. Lady Londonderry on that occasion said the reason for Church schools was that religion and education might be intertwined; that knowledge must be the handmaiden of faith; and that godless knowledge was very dangerous and likely to do more harm than good to its possessor. What struck him as being very strange was that while Lady Londonderry was saying that in Sunderland, her noble husband should be opposed to Catholic University education in Ireland.

He would not dwell on the way in which Catholic education had for generations been starved. He would not dwell on the awful period when it was a criminal offence for one Roman Catholic to teach another. If he did, he might be told that he was talking ancient history. But he would say with regard to that, though a man might live till he was a hundred years of age his life was but a day in the history of a nation. When one country ground down another, as England had ground down Ireland, the evil was not remedied at the moment when some of the chains were struck off. It had been truly written that the sins of the fathers should be visited on the children. The evil done by one generation took many generations to repair. Catholic Emancipation was not an atonement to Ireland. It was no more than the preface to an atonement. On these grounds he supported the Resolution. He was not afraid to let the overwhelming majority of the people of Ireland have a University of their own maintained by the State. They were as much entitled to that as Trinity College was to the plunder it got from the Catholic acres of Ireland. He believed that the Catholic intellect of the country if only given a fair chance would, before long, under an extended system of education, bring back the days when the learning of Ireland was the glory and the pride of Christendom.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the words from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'in the opinion of this House, the provision for Universities is totally inadequate, and none can be regarded as equitable which does not secure for the Catholics of Ireland, equally with other members of the community, facilities for University education without violence to their religious feeling.'—(*Mr. Murphy*)—instead thereof."

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. J. F. HOPE (Sheffield Brightside) said he thought this was a question in which perhaps more than in any other there was a great misuse of terms. It was always referred to outside as the Irish Roman Catholic question. That was an utterly wrong conception of the facts. When one spoke of a Roman Catholic University one would naturally understand it to be a University in which there was a religious test, and in which the Roman Catholic hierarchy had some *ex officio* right, as in the Catholic University of Quebec, or of Freiburg in Switzerland. But that was not the case here, and they were prepared to accept the declarations of the Roman Catholic hierarchy of Ireland who in 1897 said that the majority of the governing body were to be laymen, and that there was to be no religious test. What was there in such a University that could by any possibility do any harm? It was said in Ireland that the Irish Unionists opposed this demand for a new University because they wished to keep for themselves the monopoly of appointments for which their better education qualified them. His Unionist friends, he knew, repudiated that, and their opposition could not be based on their objection to an endowment being given to an educational institution of a denominational character, and therefore, he could only assume that their opposition was due to the fact that it was thought that the creation of such a University would provide machinery or an organisation which the hierarchy of Ireland would use to their own advantage. But if there was any danger at all in the creation of this University it would be in quite a different direction. When once they set higher education going they could not stop it. His personal conviction was that no one had anything to fear, although he could quite imagine that the old-fashioned or more conservative among the clergy might fear certain results from such a University. But clearly, if the clergy themselves by their official utterances said they were not afraid of a self-governed University, surely no one else need be.

He quite admitted that if Trinity College were an English University, and the conditions were English conditions, some arrangement might, no doubt, be made, just as it had been in England; but the circumstances were entirely different in England, for the reason that our historic memories were not so vivid as they were in Ireland. Here our actions in the present were not so influenced by our visions of the past. In Ireland memories were much more vivid, and the circumstances which gave rise to them more recent, because, after all, it was only 107 years since the struggle in 1798, which gave rise to many bitter memories. But there was another reason for this, which was, that there was a complication not only of religion but of race. He was convinced the difference of race was stronger to disintegrate people than religion to keep them together. That was seen in Germany and Austria. In Germany, where there was great religious difficulty, higher education went on without difficulty. In Austria, where, speaking roughly, there were no religious difficulties, the racial differences were of the acutest possible description, and they showed themselves, above all things, in the matter of higher education. He did not wish to minimise the religious difficulties, but altogether apart from religion he did not think Irishmen as a whole could be expected to accept Trinity College, seeing that it was a kind of historic embodiment of all to which they felt the utmost aversion.

Higher education all round in Ireland was admittedly defective. Quite recently in connection with an important appointment in the statistical branch of the Department of Agriculture it was found impossible to obtain an Irishman with the necessary qualifications and a Scotchman was appointed. ["Oh."] Sir Horace Plunkett was, above all things, a patriotic Irishman, and would certainly not have gone elsewhere if he could have found a qualified Irishman. The whole *status* of higher education in Ireland must suffer unless this side was recognised, as it would be impossible to set up a fully equipped University in Belfast while the wishes of the great majority in the West and South were ignored. He regretted that the question had been brought forward in its present form, as the vote taken would not in any way represent the true opinion of the House. Hon. Members opposite might have either brought forward a Motion on a private Members' night, or introduced a Bill; and even now he hoped the matter would be raised in such a form that technical difficulties would not prevent a true expression of opinion.

It was frequently said that no English Government had anything to gain by making this concession, as no gratitude would be shown for it. He protested against political action in matters of such importance being based on the expectation of favours to come. The Government had received no gratitude for passing the Irish Local Government Act, but that did not alter the fact that it was a right and proper thing to do. Th recent Land Act would not affect the Home Rule question in the present generation, but nevertheless it was a great measure, redounding to the credit of the Government and the late Chief Secretary. Similar instances might be quoted in regard to England. The clause dealing with the pupil teacher question, inserted in the Education Act by the Prime Minister, would probably not secure to the Government a single vote, but, for all that, it was designed to deal with an admitted hardship under which Nonconformists laboured, and it was right that action should have been taken. The only principle that could be recognised in the matter was to do the right thing and leave gratitude out of the question. He felt strongly on this subject, because they who maintained the Union most fervently alleged that the English Government could under the Union solve the problems of Ireland, and they pointed to the instances he had named as bearing out that view. But here was an exception. The Union had failed to grapple with the question of higher education in Ireland. Until that problem had been settled, and settled under the Union, a special responsibility devolved upon Unionists, and they had to admit that there was a special work as yet undone. He trusted his hon. friends would consider this question upon its merits, altogether apart from what they thought were the aims or manœuvres of hon. Members opposite and the turmoil of Party politics. If they did so he believed they would be forced to the conclusion that there was a real want in the government of Ireland which it was time they set to work to supply.

MR. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire) said it was impossible to take part in this debate without a sense of sadness. Year after year the question had been debated, but nothing had come of it. The Unionist Party had been in power for ten years, with unrivalled majorities, resources, and opportunities, and yet in a most pressing question—probably the most pressing question at this moment affecting Ireland—not one step in advance had been made. It was not because many Members opposite did not sympathise with the sentiments which the hon. Member for the Brightside Division had just expressed. For many years the Prime Minister himself had been deeply interested in the question, and only six years ago he wrote to his constituents—

> "I hope so as a Unionist, because I know not how to claim for a British Parliament that it can do for Ireland all and more than all that Ireland can do for itself."

Last night the Party opposite showed no sign of sympathy with any suggestion of handing over to the Irish people the control of questions which concerned them most closely, and yet here was a burning and urgent question which they would neither deal with themselves nor allow the Irish people to settle. That was a deplorable state of things for the British Parliament. Many Members on either side of the House would be in keen sympathy with the desire to do something substantial for the reform of higher education in Ireland; the blame for nothing having been done could not be laid solely on the Party opposite. The shadow of religious bigotry had played on both sides of the House; in both Parties there were men who could not look at this question as a whole, but whose vision was distorted, and whose way of looking at things was coloured by prejudice derived from religious convictions which, although entitled to respect, could not be allowed to dominate the chances of those whose consciences led them in a different direction. He wished to put a point of view which, if steadily held to, would enable this question to be dealt with free from much of the disadvantage from which it had suffered through being treated as a religious question.

There had been considerable misuse of terms. It was deplorable that the matter should have been discussed as a question of a Catholic University. The question which had to be faced was that of higher education in Ireland, and it would have been infinitely better to have spoken of it as such. The task of Parliament was to solve the problem by giving Ireland the higher education she required without offending the conscience of anybody, whether Catholic or Protestant. The present condition of education, whether primary, secondary, or University, was deplorable. There had recently been two Reports on the subject. One was the Report of a Royal Commission—in many respects the most unsatisfactory Report he had ever seen, because nearly every signatory made an addendum dissenting from the Report that he had signed. The Report was of value, however, in that it brought out the strength and reality of the feeling which existed in favour of the redress of the grievance; and supplied a mass of material which previously had not been available in a collected form. The other Report was that of Mr. Dale, an English inspector sent over to investigate the condition of elementary education in Ireland, and to show the relative positions in the two countries. That Report revealed a deplorable state of things. The attendance in primary schools was 20 per cent. less than in England or Scotland; the influence of higher education in the training of primary teachers was almost absent; and there was a general condition of confusion and chaos. The only conclusion to be drawn was that education, whether general or University, in Ireland was thirty years behind anything we had in this country. With technical education they had the same state of things staring them in the face.

The Government had placed upon the Estimates for education of a University type in England and Wales something like £168,000, and that was more by £50,000 as the result of the Report of a Committee upon this question. In Scotland the State spent something like £43,000, but in Ireland the amount was not more than £32,000. With regard to resources, within the past ten years six new Universities had been added in England, at Birmingham, London, Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds, and Sheffield. Scotland had four Universities, one to every million of the population, but Scotland enjoyed great advantages through the liberality of a private individual, Mr. Carnegie, who had given the interest upon £2,000,000 to be applied for the maintenance and development of Scottish Universities. Let them contrast this with the state of things in Ireland. Whereas they had done everything they could within the last few years to improve University teaching on this side of St. George's Channel, in Ireland they had done practically nothing. They had in Ireland one single teaching University in Dublin. This University had honourable traditions and he should be the last person to injure or destroy it in any way. One had only to look at the figures of the students to show that it was not prosperous; and the number of students was not increasing at the rate which one would expect from an institution with such honourable and distinguished traditions. In 1881 there were 1,338 students at Trinity College, Dublin, of whom seventy-four were Catholics; in 1891, 1,162, of whom seventy-six were Catholics; and in 1901 the total was 976, of whom seventy-three were Catholics. In the condition of things it was evident that even in the case of this one University things were not prospering for higher education in Ireland. There were the three Queen's Colleges, in Cork, Belfast, and Galway. Were they prospering? These colleges were also going down in regard to the number of their students. In 1882 the number of students attending Queen's College, Belfast, was 567; but in 1902 the number had fallen to 349. At Queen's College, Cork, in 1882 the total was 402, and in 1902 they fell to 190; whilst at Galway in 1882 the total was 201, and in 1902 there were only ninety-three students at that college. Altogether these figures represented a drop from 1,170 students in 1882 to 632 in 1902. From these figures it was obvious that things were not going well even with the existing resources for higher education in Ireland. The Royal University of Ireland was merely an examining Board. True there were certain fellowships under an arrangement for the benefit of an institution which had been struggling under immense disadvantages—he meant the Catholic University College in Dublin, a body which had fought under immense disadvantages and had nevertheless been able to keep its feet. Education of a University type in Ireland was deplorable in comparison with what they possessed in England and Scotland. Hope long deferred seemed to have a sickening effect, because they had a specimen of this in the gradual drop in the number of students at the Queen's Colleges, and at the University of Dublin. That suggested that it was urgently necessary that this question should be energetically dealt with, but he felt confident that they would make no progress with it so long as they simply discussed Catholic grievances.

He thought the best way of treating the question for Ireland was to deal with it as an educational question. He thought he had said enough to make good his point that on educational grounds alone this was an urgent problem. Those who knew Ireland best knew the great want of facilities for higher education. A large part of the present facilities were for the education of priests. This system produced amongst the population of Ireland a concentration of the higher education in the persons of the priests, and, if that were so, then almost inevitably the laity became separated intellectually from the level of the priesthood. The difficulty went further. If there was one thing more than another which they ought to do in Ireland it was to induce the people who held the religion of the great majority of the people, and who also held their political opinions, to take their part in the administrative work of the country, and encourage them to play a leading part in carrying on the affairs of the State, which must be administered no matter what Government was in power and even if there was no Government at all. And yet these people were shut out from competing for those positions with their more fortunate fellow-subjects. This was the inevitable result. A young man commenced his education in a primary school from which he passed on to the secondary education and then his career was barred because there was no University life to carry him further, and no prizes to lift him into a position in which the posts at the disposal of the State would be open to him. In this way they had produced in Ireland an amount of discontent among the young men such as was without parallel in any part of the kingdom. That was one great grievance.

It might be said that these grievances were not disputed but that they could not be dealt with. He held that they could be dealt with. There had been a plain policy before the country associated with the personal views of the Prime Minister, and if they were in earnest on both sides of the House it was possible to grapple with the existing educational difficulty in Ireland. It was not enough to leave Ireland with a single teaching University. Statesmen had often suffered from rash attempts to meddle with that body. After a careful study of this question the advice he would give to any English statesmen who talked of meddling with Trinity College, and improving it to form the National University, was that he should keep his hands off it. It was like the Ark of the Covenant, and any English statesman that laid his hands thereon would surely perish. The history of the attempts which had been made in the past clearly proved that. Trinity College was like the great Universities of this country, for it possessed a history, and he preferred to preserve it with its great traditions and the great names associated with it, and if possible increase its strength, and let it serve those who required its services most. It was not a Catholic college and never would be, because its history had stamped it too much with other associations. It was not a poor man's college and never would be, because it was wanted by the class of people who went to the older Universities in this country and he did not want to disturb that state of things. What they did want was a University life of the type they had been accustomed to in Scotland and which was now growing up in the great Universities in England which had been called into being within the last ten years, and which were accessible to the sons of the poorer classes if they were found to possess sufficient talent.

Was it beyond the wit of man to devise a plan to bring that about? He did not think they would find any real jealousy on the part of Protestants if they showed that they were treating Catholics and Protestants with an absolutely even hand, and with even justice, and that in any case they were creating a University which was not stamped with the hall-mark of any denomination. With regard to the Maynooth resolutions in 1897, they provided that no State money should be devoted to religious teaching, that there should be security against the dismissal of teachers, and that there should be a majority of laymen upon the governing body. He was one of those who thought that the priesthood desired to get as much power as they could in shaping the University, but it was their business not to give them all that they desired in this respect, but simply to give them what was necessary in the interests of education without offending their susceptibilities. He had spoken with many distinguished Irish Catholics upon this question and what they really objected to was that Irish Catholics were not in a Catholic atmosphere at Trinity College, which was a Protestant University. It seemed to him that what was dreaded was that they would find themselves in an atmosphere which was hostile to the religion in which they had been brought up. He did not believe that in Ireland any real opposition would be found to University training which was undenominational, if there was something of a guarantee that the atmosphere of the University should be such as not to threaten the convictions of the students who went there. They dreaded more than anything else the influence which University teaching might have on religious conviction. That was nothing new. He knew many strong dissenters who refused to send their sons to the English Universities for fear the atmosphere should lead them in the way of Anglicanism. He thought these convictions were carried a great deal too far, and that they had done a great deal of mischief in the past. Surely it was not beyond their power to found an open University—open not only in the sense of conforming to the resolutions of Maynooth, but in the way of providing the best lay education that could be found in Ireland—and so to select the governing body that there should be a negative assurance that there should not be an atmosphere hurtful in the way of direct aggression on the convictions or early training of those who were sent there.

He did not think it was enough to make one University of that kind. Nothing more disappointed him in the Report of the Royal Commission of 1903 than the declaration that Belfast did not want a University in the North of Ireland. He did not believe that. In Belfast he had talked with a good many highly interested people, and he could never find that that conviction existed. Things of that kind had been said, but always under cover of the belief that the proposal was to endow the Roman Catholics of Ireland. If one went to Belfast, a city teeming with wealth and activity, where the desire for learning was felt among the people, he would find—and he spoke from experience—the keenest desire that they should be redeemed from the reflection that a great city like theirs should be without any University life. The University had to be fashioned on a modern pattern, free from the stamp of religious bigotry, and to be made big enough; and if founded on those lines they would find that the people of Belfast would welcome it, just as a University would be welcomed in the South. It was not beyond the wit of man to establish two open Universities, one in Belfast and the other in Dublin, managed in the main by laymen, and free as far as possible from denominational taint, care being taken in the appointment of the governing body that there should be nothing of that aggressive atmosphere which those who were responsible for the religious training of the young men of Ireland feared in University teaching in that country. That was no new policy. It had been discussed for many years past. It was associated with some of the earlier utterances of the Prime Minister.

He could not but fear that they had reached a stage at which, unless they did something of the kind, this question of Irish University education would remain unsolved for as long in the future as it had remained unsolved in the past. They would reach a stage when it would form the strongest argument for Home Rule. It was surely only by placing this question on the highest educational basis that they could secure the support of the majority of the people which was necessary if such a scheme was to be carried. Let them eliminate from their debates this evil dream of Catholic University education. Let them put before Parliament as their policy that they were seeking to establish in Ireland the highest education for the benefit both of Catholic and Protestant. It might be undenominationalism, but in Ireland it must mean, and could only mean, the equal treatment of denominations. They could at least by equal treatment in such a fashion secure that the University would not be hall-marked as in any way representing on the one hand a priest-ridden Party, or, on the other hand, the dogmas of Protestantism. He did feel it was desirable that they should try to deal with this question so far as possible on non-Party lines. He blamed the Conservative Party for not dealing with it, for, he thought, they had had an easier time than those on his side of the House were likely to have. He thought that, on his side of the House also there was room for blame. This was not a matter for Party recriminations. They should try to deal with this question in an enlightened fashion and on broad national lines, not as affecting Ireland alone, but as something affecting the well-being of the United Kingdom as a whole. He called it nothing short of a menace to the State that higher education in Ireland should be allowed to remain as it was at the present time. It was in the hope that they might come to a new state of things in which they would discuss education for education's sake, and no longer as a branch of religious controversy, that he had taken part in this debate.

Mr. GORDON (Londonderry, S.) said he had heard this question debated several times in the House, but he did not think he had ever heard anything to equal the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Haddingtonshire. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that he had found out a new remedy for this great and troublesome question. According to him they were no longer to call it a question of a Catholic University. They were to speak of the "problem of higher education in Ireland." He was quite willing to accept that view of the question if their Nationalist friends would do the same, and not place it on the basis of denomination. But he thought the right hon. Gentleman would find very small support from the Nationalist Members. The hon. Member who moved the Motion made a fair and moderate speech. He said what was wanted was a University not for Catholics as Catholics but for Irishmen as Irishmen. If the hon. Member had stopped there he should have been perfectly satisfied. When a University of that kind was given to Ireland it was banned after a few years by the representatives of the Catholic hierarchy, because they could not have the control they sought to have. He did not care whether they put control in the hands of Roman Catholic laymen or Roman Catholic prelates, and prelates were not in the position of a Protestant Bishop or Archbishop. No Protestant prelate ever dared to arrogate to himself such power as to say through his layman representing the official religion of the University, "This involves a question of faith and morals. I say that the people of my flock are to take their religion from me and that they shall stay away and leave your schoolrooms empty." That meant that the control must be centred in the Roman Catholic hierarchy. The Unionists in Ireland objected on principle to State aid being given in connection with religion to any University. He, as an Irishman, was willing that every Roman Catholic layman should have his fair share of educational advantages in Ireland, and his fair share of educational control, but he was not willing that the University education of Ireland should be placed directly or indirectly under the control of any denominational heirarchy—he did not care what it was.

They were asked what was the objection of Unionists in Ireland to this measure. First, they said in principle there should be no State aid given to a religion in connection with any University. Next, they said no University should be founded upon denominational lines, and for any one denomination more than another. He accepted what the right hon. Gentleman opposite said, that it should be for all Parties. Those were the views which those who sent him held in reference to education. He knew something of the North of Ireland, and he could tell the right hon. Gentleman that even his great intuitive powers had failed him when he came in conflict with the Report of the Royal Commission. He said he had visited Belfast and had come to the opposite conclusion with regard to local wishes. The Belfast people were too wise in their generation. They knew that a small denominational University would carry no weight. They wanted a hall-mark for their young men which would be recognised as the stamp of education in the man. England, with its vast industrial population increasing in numbers, had six Universities. Its large centres wanted a modern type of University to give them something slightly different from what they got in the higher and technical schools. This was quite apart from any class of population in Ireland. Belfast was building a large technical school and would have its educational requirements met so far as higher and technical education were concerned; but they desired that their University education should not be limited to the students sent into

Queen's College, but should have a larger basis, and that, if possible, all Ireland should be brought into one University and get its degree from one institution. They felt that everything that widened the area from which the students were drawn would give additional weight to the degrees conferred. Scotland had four Universities, and there was no country in the world where University education was held so high, and where the desire to obtain it so pervaded every class.

What were they to say to the facts adduced to bring them to the conclusion that they should have three Universities in Ireland. The right hon. Gentlemen said leave Dublin University alone; start a University for the North of Ireland at Belfast, and another for the South at Cork. What were the figures he gave to support this proposal. The University of Dublin, which was to be left alone, had dwindled in numbers from 1,300 to 900 in twenty years, and that in spite of a very large increase in Presbyterian students. He did not want to say too much in favour of Trinity College. He had not hesitated to say it had a great deal to answer for with regard to the position of University education in Ireland. He thought if it had been more liberal in its views, and had been governed on a more liberal basis, it could have done a good deal of itself to solve the question. They could not help that, however; they had to deal with existing facts. Take Belfast. The right hon. Gentleman said they had a decreasing number of students in the Queen's College, although the population was growing enormously. In Cork and Galway, also, the number was diminishing, and yet they were to come to the conclusion that they ought to set up two new Universities in Ireland. The class of people for whom Queen's College, Belfast, was founded, had never said they wanted a University, and were they to be told now in the same breath that the numbers were diminishing and that they must start a new University? The right hon. Gentleman said, "Do not talk about any Roman Catholic atmosphere, or any Presbyterian dogmas, or Episcopalian atmosphere, but get University education for Ireland." If he could persuade the Nationalists to accept that he would not have much difficulty in getting the people of Ireland to come to the House for money for Universities. But that was not what was wanted. It would not satisfy the requirements of hon. Members opposite.

Now, what were the true facts of the matter? The Amendment spoke of violence to the religious feelings of Catholics, but though he had listened to everything said on the other side he had heard nothing in the nature of any evidence adduced that there was violence to Catholic feeling in any of the existing Universities or colleges in Ireland. Because the managing body of a University, formed from its graduates, happened to be Protestant, and though they had now put the institution on the broadest basis, and had offered to the Roman Catholics of the country the right to built a chapel within its walls for their religious purposes, if they would come in, could it be said that violence was done to the religious feelings of Catholics? They should look at the question as practical men, and not from the sentimental point of view, and it would be found that there was no disability any Roman Catholic suffered from that did not apply equally to Presbyterians or Episcopalians. The fact was these colleges were banned because they could not be controlled by one section of the community. They were told by hon. Gentlemen that they had got in Ireland a purely denominational primary education; but the basis of primary education in Ireland, so far as the House of Commons could make it, was on non-sectarian and non-denominational lines. And it was the duty of the House of Commons to see that any new University set up should be put upon a basis in which no favour was shown to any one denomination. The very thing that was being done was the getting rid of the denominational system, and yet the British House of Commons was asked to establish a new University with an official religion. Certainly that would be a retrograde step and going in a different way from the course which had been adopted in connection with Great Britain. He thought that the British House of Commons ought never in any way—either by vote, or enactment—to show its sanction or sympathy to any such course.

It had been frequently said that this course had the sympathy of the Prime Minister. He had always understood that the right hon. Gentleman's views were that it was a matter of expediency and not a matter in which he considered it was right or logical or proper to establish denominational colleges in the Universities. He thought it was a great mistake to press this matter now, when there was something better to be done in a few years. So far as he was concerned, and so far as those whom he represented were concerned, they entirely dissociated themselves from the idea of having any separate denominational University either for themselves or anyone else. They dissociated themselves from the idea of being parties to any unfair treatment of any of their fellow-subjects in Ireland. They were perfectly willing to stand on the same footing with regard to University education, and they objected to anyone being put in a different or worst position.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said that for thirty years every Chief Secretary who had been sent from this House to govern Ireland had been a supporter of the claims of Catholics in this matter with the possible exception, he thought, of Mr. Jackson, whose views on Ireland no one could ever ascertain. It was not unnatural, especially after the emphatic declaration to which he gave utterance in the House on Tuesday last, that they were anxious to know the views of the new Chief Secretary on this question of a Catholic University. He thought it was rather a sinister fact that although this debate had been put down for that date at long notice, and must have been known to the right hon. Gentleman ever since he was appointed, he had taken that opportunity of absenting himself from the House, and all the more strange was it that his absence was for the purpose of paying a visit to Lord Londonderry, and that at an early date he was to address a select representation of the Orangemen of Ireland under the patronage of Lord Londonderry, who was a recognised leader of a small bigoted gang of men in the North of Ireland, who for many years had successfully blocked this question. It was rather a sinister omen for Irishmen, who had fought in this matter for twenty-five years, as to the prospect of a settlement of the question so long as the right hon. Gentleman remained in office.

This question, it seemed to him, was one the importance of which was not recognised in the House. He had spoken at intervals for many years on it, and he remembered that a quarter of a century ago definite pledges were given from the then leaders of the Tory Party that the question would be settled in the following year. In his opinion there was no question of greater importance to the well-being of Ireland than this question of University education. He did not believe there was any grievance which had inflicted a deadlier wound upon the Irish nation than the denial to the people of access to higher education. He had always held that they could not have in any country a proper system of education, primary or secondary, unless they had a proper system of University and higher education. Some people held the view that they should begin at the bottom and then rear up a structure. He held a totally different view, namely, that the true foundation of a proper system of education was to make provision for the higher education of the people, and that they could not have effective primary or secondary education until the higher education of the people was properly provided for.

Allusion had been made to the Royal Commission which commenced its labours in 1901. Although that Report had been treated with the utmost possible contempt, and appeared never to have engaged the attention of the Government for a moment, it was really a valuable and instructive document. As to the bearing of University education on the other branches of the education of the people the Royal Commission said that every year more than 300 primary school teachers were sent out by the training colleges in Dublin and Belfast, and that, with facilities such as were provided in Wales, at least 100 of them might obtain the advantages of a University training. Further, the Report said that a large part of the teaching in literary and scientific subjects at present given in the training colleges might be undertaken much more fruitfully by a University college. He entirely agreed with that view. No language was too strong to describe the condition of education in Ireland. The primary and secondary schools were in a retrograde condition. There was a lack of co-ordination throughout the whole educational system of the country, which had inflicted a deadly wound, and was like a consumption throughout the whole structure of society in Ireland. In Ireland more than in any other civilised country there was necessity for co-ordination on account of the arrears in education and the great poverty of the people.

As to technical education, they had an enormous sum of money set aside for a college in Dublin, from which they were promised great things, and they had an elaborate and wasteful system of inspectors and instructors. Never was there inflicted upon an unfortunate and poverty-stricken country a greater fraud than the whole of this system. Not that he did not approve of technical instruction, or believe it was necessary in Ireland, but he considered they had commenced at the wrong end, and that, instead of beginning by reforming the ordinary system of instruction in the country, they had squandered untold sums on this system of technical education, which could never be got to work properly until they had got the other system into working order. The Irish people were in great danger of having inflicted upon them the very worst form of Socialism by being trained in sham science and technical education when there was no proper foundation of ordinary education on which to build the other structure. He knew of no more contemptible persons than the class of men with whom they were familar in Ireland who had a small smattering of practical science. There was a great danger that these men, who went round the country, would demoralise the whole country, and really they were doing their best to uproot that healthy and glorious love of true knowledge which had always been characteristic of the Irish race. He desired to say a word for that unfortunate individual, the uneducated man, who could neither read nor write and was condemned on all sides. He had met amongst his countrymen in America and Ireland those who could not read but who were far better educated men than many of the instructors who were going about Ireland. In the company of the men he had mentioned he would rather spend his time, and from them he could get instruction which could not be obtained from these instructors.

Instead of progressing, Ireland was going back in education, and was in danger of getting worse from year to year. When the question of Irish education was discussed on April 18th last year, the late Chief Secretary said that the Government could not allow a new disparity to be made between England and Ireland in respect of education, and that although the difficulties were great it was the duty of Parliament to get over or round them or in some way get beyond them so as to prevent new disabilities on the rising generation of a country for whose welfare they held themselves constitutionally responsible. In the first week of this session he asked the Chief Secretary whether the Government proposed to introduce any legislation this year dealing with the question of Irish education in any branch. The Answer of the late Chief Secretary was "No, Sir." That was the kind of treatment to which they had been subjected year after year. The loyal crowd which ruled Ireland had gone. They took no interest in education. It was a subject that did not interest the Orange Party. He would dispose if he could of the false statement, repeated *ad nauseam* in this country, that what they wanted was to control the University. He noticed that a most respectable Unionist paper in this country which for twenty years had supported their demand for a University did not even seem to appreciate the position. The *Spectator* said they believed and had always believed that what the Irish demanded as best for themselves, namely, a University controlled by ecclesiastics, was the worst thing they could have, but as they had asked for it they ought to have it. But they never did demand it and would not be willing to accept it. Was it not amazing that this statement was repeated not by their enemies, but by a Unionist paper which had supported their demands for twenty years. They had never demanded nor did they demand now a

University which was to be controlled by ecclesiastics. The present situation was that the Government had forced upon them a University College, miserably endowed no doubt, but which was kept up by £6,000 a year of the State's money, which was absolutely controlled by ecclesiastics, for, while the Government said they could not have a free University maintained by State money, it compelled them to acccept a University governed by a Jesuit. Father Delaney, who appeared as a witness before the Royal Commission, and who was one of the ablest men in Ireland, and who gave his evidence exceedingly frankly, said—

> "University College, Dublin, is a Royal College under the management of the Jesuit Order."

and then the Report went on—

> "The government of the college is entirely in the hands of the president, who is a member of the Jesuit Order. Appointments for the teaching staff of the college are made by him, and the tenure of office of the professors and other officers is governed by whatever rules he may think it desirable to make."

Was that their idea of a free University. Why did they vote money for that and then have the consummate hypocrisy to tell the Irish people they wanted a University controlled by ecclesiastics? Was it not hard for Irishmen to have patience when treated in such a way as this? The professors of this college were paid £600 annually, and six of those gentlemen gave up all their salary to the college to enable it to buy coals and to pay its rent. The only University Ireland had been able to obtain from the English Parliament was one under the absolute control of a Jesuit priest. The truth of the matter was that the whole of the Government of Ireland was saturated with hypocrisy and make-believe.

They had heard from the hon. Member for South Derry that primary education for Ireland was set up as a purely sectarian system by Parliament and was to give education to all religious denominations. That was the system originally set up by this Parliament, but when it crossed the Channel it was found to be impossible and it was abandoned, and they adopted the only system that would be tolerated, yet they now said they could not give the money for a college where there was any restraint on the freedom of the teaching that went on. The ignorance of this country upon this subject was simply amazing. The great argument used was that they could not vote money for a University controlled by ecclesiastics, but they voted money every year to great free institutions like the Queen's Colleges of Ireland. Every professor who went into a Queen's College had to sign the following declaration—

> "I, A. B., do hereby promise to the President and Council of Queen's College that I will faithfully and to the best of my ability discharge the duties of professor of in the said college, and I further promise and engage that in lecturing and examining and in the performances of all other duties connected with my Chair I will carefully abstain from teaching or advancing any doctrine or making any statement derogatory to the truths of revealed religion or injurious or disrespectful to the religious convictions of any portion of my class or audience. And I moreover promise to the President and Council that I will not introduce or discuss in my place or capacity of professor any subject of controversy, political or religious, tending to produce contention or excitement nor will I engage in any avocation which the Council shall judge inconsistent with my office, but will as far as in me lies promote on all occasions the interests of education and the welfare of the college."

It was right to point out that the last official statement of the Bishops issued in 1897 did not insist on the strict denominationalism formerly demanded. The Bishops therein declared their readiness to accept the Test Acts and to open the emoluments of the institutions to all comers. They also accepted the principle that laymen should preponderate on the governing body. And they also accepted the principle that the freedom of the professors in their teaching was to be safeguarded by an independent body of visitors. Surely that was not an ecclesiastically-governed University. Taking the demands and resolutions of the Bishops themselves it was a gross mis-statement to say that they wanted an ecclesiastically-governed University. What did the laity demand? This was not, as hon. Members and the Government had all along tried to show, a matter between themselves and the Catholic Bishops. The question mainly concerned the Catholic laity of Ireland, and the laity had a right to be heard. In the debate of 1898, Mr. Courtney, who might fairly be taken as a leading champion of undenominational education, declared that he would be quite prepared to grant the Nationalist demand if they would accept a democratically-governed University in which the governing body was recruited from the graduates. In December last he read the speech at a meeting in Dublin of a new society of Catholic graduates and undergraduates, and stated that as a Catholic layman he was prepared to accept and support such a scheme, giving the Bishops, if they chose, a small representation *de jure* on the board. No objection had been raised by any leading Catholic layman to that view, and he now asked whether the House of Commons was prepared to refuse such a University?

They were not without experience as to the working of such a scheme and the attitude of the Bishops to it. Nothing was more interesting in the history of education in Ireland than the career and present position of the Catholic University School of Medicine in Dublin. When after many years that School of Medicine, having been boycotted by the Government and refused power to grant degrees, came to the end of its resources, and could no longer keep its doors open, the Bishops handed over the arts faculty to the Jesuits, and set up the Catholic School of Medicine as an independent body. They applied to the Commissioners of Education for statutory power to frame a constitution. A very liberal constitution was drawn up; the school was governed by four *ex officio* members, two being deans in residence and two Bishops; six members were elected by the faculty, and four were appointed by the Bishops from among the Catholic doctors of Dublin. How had that system worked? The *ex officio* Bishops hardly ever went near the place, and the government of the school had practically passed into the hands of the faculty, who appointed the teachers and controlled the teaching. Without endowment or recognition by the Government that school was to-day admittedly the best medical school in Ireland. In the face of such an example of liberality, was it not monstrous that Irish young men should be blindly refused University education because Parliament was dominated by outworn prejudices and false catch cries, which had been handed down from generation to generation, but for which there was not a shadow of justification? In the whole civilised world there was not a more scandalous spectacle than that school presented. Most of its professors had studied in the leading cities on the Continent; there was an enormous number of earnest students, and the professors of physiology and practical chemistry had to lecture twice a day because the lecture-rooms were so small; but the Government would not give them a penny towards the cost of larger rooms, and they had none of those laboratories or expensive appliances which with superabounding generosity Continental Governments supplied to their schools. All these advantages were denied to the Catholic School of Medicine, but at the same time money was being squandered to an appalling amount on every conceivable form of humbug and mock education. The Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction was spending £41,000 a year in salaries for an army of officials who were of no advantage to the country; but this School of Medicine, doing the best work that the country could show, was boycotted and starved by the paternal Government under which they lived.

What was the recent history of this University question? So far from any progress having been made, they were farther from a settlement than ever. In 1901 the Government appointed a Royal Commission, for which the Nationalist Party disclaimed any responsibility whatever, to inquire into the facilities existing in Ireland for University education; but from the scope of that Commission Trinity College was most carefully excluded. The Prime Minister's speeches had long since ceased to raise any hope in his breast, but on April 22nd, 1901, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "It is necessary in this question that we should have the fullest information on the subject, and I trust that when the Commission reports, which I do not think will be very long, the result will be that the public opinion in this country will render it perfectly possible for the House to deal practically with the problem which I have been endeavouring to elucidate."

The Commission, taking two years to investigate the question, presented their

Report, and a more interesting document was never issued. If hon. Members would read the three volumes of evidence as he had done — he did not suppose they would—they would obtain really exhaustive information on the Irish University question. The Commission had a splendid representation of all that was best in the English educational world, but it was characteristically manned, since, although appointed to inquire into the grievances of Irish Catholics, it had not a single Irish Catholic layman upon it. The Commissioners, in summarising their conclusions, declared that—

> "The present arrangement by which the degrees of the Royal University are attainable by examination alone has lowered the ideals of University life and education in Ireland and should be abolished, and that the system by which, in making appointments to the senate and offices, account must be taken of the religious profession of the person to be appointed with a view to maintaining an even balance between Churches is educationally unsound."

And so they went on condemning *seriatim* every provision for University education, and they drew up an elaborate scheme, to which all the Commissioners agreed, suggesting the remedy. One recommendation was that the endowment and equipment of a new college in Dublin should be on the scale required by a University college of the first rank. That college was to be for Catholics, and they framed a constitution not as liberal as the one which he proposed on behalf of the Irish Party. That Report was presented in 1903, but it had since been thrown into the wastepaper basket and not the slightest notice had been taken of it. He had in his hand the separate note of Professor Dickey who represented the Presbyterians of the North, and he appeared to be a more liberal representative of the Presbyterians than they were accustomed to meet in the House of Commons. Professor Dickey represented Magee College, which trained the clergy of the Presbyterian Church, and he strongly supported the proposition of the First Lord of the Treasury, as set forth in his letter to his constitutents, recommending the establishment and endowment of a separate University to meet the wants of the Catholics in Ireland, a proposition which he considered was the only practical solution. He did not need to labour any other portion of that Report. He thought the First Lord of the Treasury would agree that he was not at all exaggerating when he declared that this was one of the weightiest condemnations ever pronounced upon the educational system of Ireland. And yet that Report was never discussed in the House, and no attempt had been made by the Government to frame a scheme upon the recommendations of that Report. The men who devoted so much labour to investigating this question were men of great distinction, and he thought they had been treated in a very scurvy fashion by the Government.

In the autumn of 1903, shortly after this Report was issued, rumours began to circulate that the Government had decided to take no action on it but that they had a totally new scheme. Ireland was thick with rumours of this new plan to settle the University question, but throughout the summer and autumn of 1903 not a single Member of the Nationalist Party was permitted to hear what this scheme was. They heard some extraordinary rumours. It was said that Sir Antony MacDonnell went to Belfast and promised them large sums of money if they would agree to this new scheme. He went to Trinity College and promised them £10,000 or £20,000 a year if they would agree to the scheme. He wished to know, did the Government authorise Sir Antony MacDonnell to promise £20,000 a year to Trinity College? He thought that a Question on which he was entitled to have an Answer. He noticed that the right hon. Gentleman representing Trinity College was engaged in conversation with the First Lord of the Treasury, and perhaps he would be able to tell him whether he was correct or not when he stated that this offer had been made to Trinity College. If this offer had been made with the approval of the Government he was not finding fault with it, but he wanted to know whether it was the action of the Government. He wanted to know what were the principles and the methods by which Ireland was governed. This kind of thing went on during the autumn of 1903, and finally their hopes were raised by a remarkable letter published on the very last day of 1903 in the Press by Lord Dunraven.

He thought they were entitled to know from the First Lord of the Treasury whether that letter, which raised the hopes of the Irish people to the highest possible point, was published with the consent of the late Chief Secretary for Ireland, and was the First Lord of the Treasury a party to that transaction.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.) was understood to say that he knew nothing about it.

MR. DILLON said the right hon. Gentleman professed to know nothing about it, but was it not a monstrous thing that the Irish people should be deluded in this way. An official offered £10,000 to Trinity College and the First Lord of the Treasury knew nothing about it. Servants of the Government were allowed to offer large financial bribes to the Presbyterians of Belfast [MINISTERIAL cries of "Order, order!"] He did not mean anything offensive, and he would say that servants of the Government were allowed to offer large financial inducements to get them to agree to a scheme, and then they were told that the Government knew nothing about it. He did not wonder that the Bishops of Ireland were so bitter after the way they had been treated. The Bishops asked how far they would go and they accepted the scheme only on the understanding that the Government meant business. Now they were told that the Government never meant business at all. They were to have a great debate later on upon the whole question of these devolution proposals, and the proceedings which led up to them. That would be a very interesting debate; but nevertheless they were entitled to know the relations of the Government in regard to the proceedings of Sir Antony MacDonnell upon this University question. These proceedings took place more than a year ago, and there had been ample opportunities for the Attorney-General to find out who was at the back of the Dunraven letter upon the University question. Why did the right hon. Gentleman not set his detectives to work to discover where the letter was written. He really thought that this was a very significant illustration of the whole method of Irish Government, and it had added enormously to the exasperation of those who were so deeply interested in this question.

For thirty years they had been promised by successive Irish Secretaries and successive Prime Ministers that this question would be settled in the House of Commons, but since last year a backward step had been taken which, if adhered to, would put a perpetual barrier between them and the realisation of their hopes. They were told by the Chief Secretary for Ireland last year that no settlement could be attempted, or ought to be attempted, until there was absolute unanimity. The First Lord of the Treasury for the first time stated categorically that this question could never be made a Government question in the House of Commons, and he went on to say that it must be settled in some other way. He said that it must be settled as Catholic Emancipation was settled. Was Catholic Emancipation not made a Government question? What great Irish grievance was there which was ever settled without being made a Government question? Supposing the doctrine had been set up in the past that no remedy should be applied as long as a minority was opposed to it—where would they have been in regard to the land question, Catholic Emancipation, the tithes question, and the disestablishment of the Irish Church? In spite of all the bitter and vehement opposition of the Protestants of Ireland who belonged to the Established Church of Ireland, Mr. Gladstone was not afraid to take up that great question. Why should the Prime Minister and the Government be afraid to take up this greater question, so far as the interests of Ireland were concerned, of higher education for the Catholics of Ireland? Why should he shrink back before a small and diminishing section of the most bigoted Protestants in Ireland, and tell the Irish people that they must do without University education practically for ever so long as they could not convert the Orange Members of Parliament? He remembered seven years ago the eloquent words in which the right hon. Gentleman appealed to the Unionist Party to remove this great reproach. Seven years had passed and they were further away from the goal to-day. No

Government had the right to exist for one day longer than the time when it had admitted that it was unable to provide for the education of the people. The Unionist Party had now had ten years of power with an enormous majority, and they had through the mouth of their leader admitted the grievance, and although they had been entreated to remedy that grievance they had refused.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down in the earlier portion of his speech was good enough to refer to many statements which it has been my duty from time to time to make in this House, in terms far too favourable for the merits of those statements, but with the addendum that he did not think it possible I should be able to add on the present occasion either to the earnestness or to the force of the appeals which I had made before, or materially to increase the strength of the arguments which have always seemed to me to point in the direction of improving the opportunities of University education in Ireland. The hon. Gentleman spoke quite accurately; there is nothing that I can say to-day which will add, either to the argumentative or to the rhetorical weight of any appeals which I may have before made to the House, and through the House to the country. I have sorrowfully to admit that when the hon. Gentleman says that since those appeals were made this particular cause has as yet made no particular progress, either in the House or in the country, I find it impossible, as an honest man, to say that in my judgment he is wrong, I think that while the hon. Gentleman has done me justice, and more than justice perhaps, in that part of his speech, he has done me something less than justice in the later remarks he made. He has asked me whether I was aware of negotiations which he says were going on in Ireland, and whether I was responsible for plans that he seems to think had emanated from the Cabinet or from myself in connection with University education in that country. He is entirely mistaken; I have done my best to persuade this House, and my countrymen at large, that the question of higher education in Ireland was one urgently deserving of their sympathetic attention, but I have never mixed myself up in any way with—indeed, I was not aware of—the transactions to which the hon. Gentleman referred in the latter part of his remarks.

If we only listened to the argumentative basis of the speeches on either side which have been put forth to-day, it would, I think, puzzle the auditor who for the first time became acquainted with this controversy to say where the insuperable difficulty lay in settling the question of higher education in Ireland. My hon. and learned friend the Member for South Derry made a very able speech against the Amendment, and laid down certain propositions which he said ought to govern any dealings with education, whether primary, secondary, or University, in Ireland, conditions which, if granted, would make him and hon. Gentlemen opposite fellow-workers on the same principles. I cannot make out that the principles laid down by my hon. and learned friend are principles repudiated by hon. Gentlemen; I listened with attention to what he said; he seemed to think that any system of education was satisfactory which, being established by this House, provided that there were to be no tests, and provided that there was not to be anything in the nature of public funds devoted to denominational purposes. But in any scheme which I, at all events, have endeavoured to advocate either in this House or elsewhere, I have never suggested either that there should be denominational tests applied to a new college or a new University, or that the funds which this House might give to such college or University should be, in even the smallest part, devoted to interests which would properly be described as denominational. Therefore, it would seem that my hon. and learned friend and I ought to have no difficulty in agreeing on this matter. I have listened to speeches by hon. Gentlemen opposite this afternoon, speeches of great ability and in some cases of great eloquence, and I do not make out that they have claimed on their part that the principles on which my hon. and learned friend and I are agreed should be transgressed by them if they had their way, and were able to obtain the educational advantages which, beyond all question, are urgently required in the interests of higher education in Ireland.

My hon. and learned friend on that last point seemed to hold a view which I frankly admit I cannot agree with. I do agree as to the undenominational character of any new educational establishment which we ought to set up, but where I differ from him is as to the need of setting up such an establishment. My hon. and learned friend appears to think that Ireland is already amply provided for, has all that a country of 4,000,000 and more inhabitants should have in the way of provision of University training; and he took advantage of certain statistics brought before the House by the right hon. Member for Haddington, who pointed out that Trinity College, Dublin, and the Queen's Colleges had all diminished in the number of their students in the course of the last twenty years. My hon. and learned friend asked, if that were the condition of Irish higher education, if that were taken as the true measure of the demand made by the Irish people for higher education, what was the object of spending more or establishing new institutions, when the old institutions are already in excess of any demand likely to be made upon them. I cannot agree with that view. It is true, and it is a melancholy truth, that Trinity College has somewhat diminished in the number of its students; but I take it that is due principally to the great agricultural revolutions through which Ireland has passed since 1881, which have gravely diminished the resources, and have perhaps not inconsiderably diminished the number of that class which used to send their sons to Trinity College. It is impossible in such a state of things that you should expect the number to be kept up to the old standard; and the only indication that that gives of the need for higher education in Ireland is to show that one class, at all events, which greatly desired education is less prosperous and numerous than it was. With regard to Queen's College, Belfast, which, situated as it is in the midst of a wealthy, thriving, progessive, and energetic community, ought, one would have supposed, to have increased, as that community itself has, I can see that the diminution in numbers may have more than one cause. But the principal cause is due to the sinister effects which I think the Royal University is having upon the interests of higher education in Ireland.

The Royal University, I believe, does do a great deal of very excellent work; but one thing it does do, and must do by the very nature of its institution, which is not at all excellent—it substitutes openly and avowedly a system of examination for a system of University training. It enables the student who has gone through nothing in the nature of a University discipline, but who has gone to the coach or the crammer with an assiduity sufficient to enable him to pass a degree, to go forth to the world as a Bachelor or Master of Arts, or as one qualified by his training to rank with those who have attended the great Universities of England, Scotland, or the Continent. Let us thrust away this fallacy from among us, let us not give in to the narrowest and shallowest view that can possibly be taken of University education, which concentrates attention on the examination which concludes the University career as if that were the one thing that gave University training value; whereas I am not sure that there might not be very strong reasons given for holding that in those Universities which either have not got final examinations, or attach no value to them, or in Universities in the past when they did not have final examinations, the education was just as good, just as broad, and satisfactory in the culture it gave, as the more modern and elaborate system to which we have become too accustomed. But whether the system of examination now prevailing in England be right or wrong, not one of those who are in favour of it will dare in these days to advocate the heresy that it is the examination, or success in the examination, which gives the true measure of what educational life can give to the youth of a country. The Royal University, whatever services it may have done to Ireland, has certainly done her great disservice if and in so far as it has spread abroad the idea that all that a University can give may be readily, cheaply, and expeditiously obtained by a success in some examination. I think that accounts, partially at all events, for the diminution in the number of students at the great colleges.

At Queen's College, Belfast, there may be found another reason. I fear that that college in some important respects is without the fund which would enable it to rank as a fully equipped University college. It lacks the means. It may be said that Belfast could provide it with the means; I do not argue that; but one thing is certain, this House cannot provide the means. It is impossible for any Government, or any Chief Secretary, to come to this House and ask for additional funds for Queen's College, Belfast, unless while bringing that great institution up to a higher educational level they are not leaving wholly untouched the grievance which has been brought before us by the Amendment. One most unhappy result of leaving this question unsettled is that it not merely injures the higher education which otherwise the Roman Catholic population of Ireland might enjoy, but stunts and sterilises the means of education which are already at the disposal of Protestants and Presbyterians in that college.

While, therefore, for these reasons I am in whole-hearted sympathy with those who desire to see this question settled I confess there is in the methods in which we are asked to assist in it a certain tone which I think Englishmen and Scotchmen naturally resent. The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down said, "You refuse to do this, and you refuse to do that. You refuse to give the form of education you desire." In one sense that is true. It is true that this House has not given the money to provide a complete scheme of higher education for Ireland; but then this House has never given money for that purpose either to England or to Scotland. I am one of those who think that the present condition of Ireland justifies special provisions being made by the Parliament of the United Kingdom; but I do not think that Irish Members further their cause when they say to Englishmen and Scotchmen, "It is your plain and obvious duty to give us those gifts which you do not give to English and Scotch Universities." Even the additional grant proposed to be given to English Universities will not raise the amount given by this House to higher education in England up to the level per head of population of that already given to Ireland. Hon. Gentlemen may think that the money is illused in Ireland, but as regards the mere amount of the Vote from this House, estimated per head of population, it is larger in Ireland than in this country. I think that consideration might modify the tone of hon. Gentlemen opposite. But we all know that, unless this House will come to the rescue of Irishmen in this matter, it is hardly possible that, from their own resources, they should be able to supply all that is required for a completely equipped University college.

Some hon. Gentlemen have discussed the merits or demerits of Trinity College, Dublin; and I think my hon. and learned friend on this side of the House, while sympathising with Trinity College, threw out the idea that, after all, as now at Trinity College there were no tests, as every opportunity was given there, and every advantage extended to Roman Catholics to take advantage of its teaching, it would be undoubtedly foolish to establish another University where already a University exists which would do all that is required. I am not, and never have been, quite certain whether those who use that argument are dealing quite sincerely with their own convictions. Does my hon. friend on this side of the House and those who agree with him on the other side wish to turn Trinity College into an institution in which the majority of the professors and students should be Roman Catholics? I have never concealed my view that I should regard such a result with the utmost dismay. Trinity College has been by character and inception—actually by law and by statute for the greater part of its history, but since 1873 by character and inception—a Protestant institution. Many Roman Catholics, I am glad to think, have gained by its teaching; but the flavour, the atmosphere, as my hon. friend has called it, of the institution is, and always has been, Protestant. Is there any Protestant in this House who sincerely wishes that to be changed? And if no Protestant wishes it to be changed, what is the only inference? The only inference is either that they are prepared serenely to say that Roman Catholics are to have no higher education or they are prepared to have some other institution in which higher education can be given to Roman Catholics. There is no other way out of that difficulty if the Roman Catholics of Ireland are to attend University education in anything like proportion to their numbers. Of course the wealthy classes, those who are most able to give their children a University education, are for the most part Protestants, but put the proportion as you like. Do not drive arithmetic to its extreme conclusions, but let us suppose that if as many Roman Catholics as could be induced to take advantage of higher education were to go to Trinity College, it is beyond doubt that that college would change in its character. But if they are not to go to that college, where are they to go? Therefore I say every man who sincerely wishes the two things I wish for—namely, that Trinity College should remain as it is and that the Roman Catholic population should have full advantage of University education—is driven to the conclusion, as I have been driven, that you must find other provision for them. I wish that dilemma would be met by any Gentleman differing from me in this respect who is going to follow me in the debate. It is a very plain issue I put forward, and I should like to know if hon. Gentlemen can solve that riddle to which I can find only one answer and to which I believe only one answer is possible.

I do not propose to add anything more to what the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has rightly described as the countless speeches I have made on this subject. I have never seen or heard any answer to the broad line of argument I have advanced. It only remains for me to deal with the personal part of the question to which the hon. Gentleman has called attention, and which figured largely in the latter part of the speech of the hon. Member for Mayo. I have been attacked—I do not say unfairly or harshly attacked—but I have been attacked because, holding these opinions and being a member of a Government which has now been in office a good many years, I have done nothing to advance the views I have consistently advocated. It is quite true that nothing has been done; but have I ever held out from the very beginning of this controversy the smallest expectation that the Government as a whole in the present state of public opinion could be got to agree on this question? I think I may be open to the observation that gentlemen in office have no right to have private opinions, and, if they have private opinions, they should be carefully kept under control, and they should on no public question express a desire for a certain policy unless they know they can give effect to it by the united action of the Cabinet and of the Party supporting them. I think there is something to be said for that view. Certainly it would save those who hold opinions to which their colleagues and their Party do not agree a great deal of inconvenience if it were understood to be correct.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) said that in his presence in August, 1889, the right hon. Gentleman said he would make this the first or one of the principal measures in the next Government, and that he would postpone the training colleges to a University scheme for Ireland. That promise was repeated in September of the same year in a celebrated speech.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not remember the speech to which the hon. Gentleman refers. I have referred to the letters to which constant reference has been made this afternoon, written to my constituents in 1898 and 1899, and there I distinctly laid it down that it was a personal opinion and that it could only be carried out as a Party measure; and I believe I expressed that opinion long anterior to those letters, and I certainly have held it in subsequent years and I do not think events have changed. I have done my best in this House at some personal sacrifice, at the cost of some unpopularity, in a manner by no means approved of by those on whose support I depend in my own constituency. I have steadily advocated this cause. I have not succeeded in converting either the House or the country, or the Party to which I have the honour to belong, or the Cabinet of which I have the honour to be a member. It may have been the fault of my arguments or of my methods of expressing them. If so, I regret it. But it is absolute folly to expect that in matters where religion comes in, as it does in this matter—religion, the great divider of mankind—you will be able to get a Party or a Government in line on a question which arouses feelings, and prejudices, I am bound to add, which have their roots in so ancient a past and whose vigour the passage of years does not appear in any sense to diminish.

The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down said no Government was worthy to exist for a moment which did not deal with this admitted grievance, if there be an admitted grievance.

MR. DILLON: It is an admitted grievance.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Then what Government in this country will be worthy to exist for a moment? Does he suppose that when the occupants of the rather thinly furnished Front Bench opposite in the course of events come into office they will find it easier to deal as a Government with this question? Is there a better agreement among Gentlemen on that side of the House than on this side with regard to higher education in Ireland? If I thought there was, I should for the first time see a reason to congratulate myself upon a change of Government.

MR. DILLON: Gentlemen on this side of the House, recognising their incapacity to deal with the question, are anxious to let us deal with it ourselves.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Are they anxious? They took very good care last night to avoid saying so. I do not see signs of unanimous anxiety on their side. Supposing that is so, I am quite unable to distinguish between giving a form of government to Ireland which we know would produce certain results to which one objects and producing those results directly. There is an hon. Gentleman opposite who I believe has a very violent objection to this proposal or anything like this proposal, but he would have no objection, as I understand it, to doing it at second hand.

MR. PERKS (Lincolnshire, Louth): I should have the strongest possible objection. I voted without knowing that the clause which permitted this to be done in the Bill of 1893 was slipped in at the last moment.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I apologise to the hon. Gentleman. The last thing I should desire would be to misrepresent him. There is an end of the idea that he is going to get out of the responsibility by wishing to give Home Rule. [A NATIONALIST Member: It does not matter about him.] It is not for me to judge whether the estimate the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Louth Division has formed of the Gentlemen below the gangway or the estimate which the Gentlemen below the gangway have formed of the Member for the Louth Division is the right one. I can only say, as regards the future of this question, which, I fear, has not advanced, that I have no hope of seeing it settled by the formal ordinary action of one Party or of the other. It can only be settled as other religious questions have been settled, not by legislation undertaken formally by any Government, but by the co-operation of the majority of the House if and when the majority of the House, from whichever side it is drawn, come to the conclusion that this is a question which ought to be dealt with.

MR. DILLON: What question does the right hon. Gentleman allude to?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will not go into the question now.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman what religious question was ever settled by this House on non-Party lines? Was the Reformation or Catholic Emancipation?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will not go into that question. If it pleases the hon. Gentleman, I will concede his present contention and say the question I suggest is a new question. I do not believe, until by some agency which I do not command, you can produce some alteration in the temper of mind of the people of this country, you will be able to have a Government homogeneous on all other points and homogeneous also on this. There is no sign of it at present on that side of the House or on this, and I fear there is no immediate prospect of it. The hon. Gentleman, turning to my friends who represent Ulster constituencies, pointed to them as the true obstacles, and the only obstacles that stand in the way of a solution of this problem. I think if my hon. friends were the only obstacles in the way we should be within measurable distance of a solution, because, earnest and devoted as they are, I do not believe they could or would stand out against the general opinion of the majority of England, Scotland, and Ireland. The difficulty of this question is not Ulster; the difficulty is Great Britain, and that is the thing, the only thing, which makes me take so dark a view of this controversy. It is only by slow degrees you can convert popular feeling on this subject. The progress must be slow; it is slower than I had hoped, and slower than I had anticipated. It is the conversion of England and Scotland that is necessary. When that is effected Ulster will gladly, I believe, acquiesce.

I have spoken with great frankness to the House. I do not know whether what I have said may be pleasing or displeasing. I may not have raised hon. Gentlemen's opinion either of my powers of persuasion or my powers of Party management, but I have frankly told the House exactly what I think of the merits of the question, and exactly what I believe as to the immediate chances of its success. The inveterate belief, and, as I think, the erroneous belief which prevails in this country that this is simply a manœuvre of the Irish Bishops to obtain the control of higher education is one which ought to be dissipated and which, I hope, may be dissipated, but it exists. The opponents of this measure, I believe, quite sincerely desire to see Irish Roman Catholics given the same opportunities as are given to Englishmen and Scotchmen. They say two things. They say, Why is Ireland asking of Great Britain privileges for Roman Catholics which Roman Catholics have not got in America, have not got in Germany, have not got in Austria, have not got in France? The second question is, Are we not in the endeavour to promote higher education in Ireland really handing over higher education to the Bishops? I do not believe we should be doing so. I do not believe that any scheme I have supported would have that effect. What is required more than anything else is not to persuade the people of this country that Ireland needs higher education, not to persuade the people of this country that in giving higher education we should be liberal in providing it, but to persuade them that the means by which that great need is to be supplied will not have as one of its collateral consequences the augmentation of clerical influence in directions to which they have a strong, inveterate, and insuperable objection.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said the Prime Minister had made many remarkable speeches on the Irish University question, but never one more remarkable than that to which the House had just listened. The right hon. Gentleman claimed to have made a frank statement. Nothing could be franker than the speech of the Prime Minister, and the frankest and most remarkable statement which it contained was the statement that the obstacle to the higher education of the Catholics of Ireland was to be found in Great Britain. Coupling that observation with others, he thought he saw what the right hon. Gentleman meant was the great obstacle —namely, ignorance, prejudice, and religious intolerance. Only a few hours before the right hon. Gentleman declared that the great binding principle of his Party was the refusal to the Irish people of the control of their own affairs, and now he was confessing that the youth of Ireland were deprived of higher education through the ignorance of the people of Great Britain. That was an astounding situation. He did not intend to quote all the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman; they had indeed been countless —in fact, had there been a little more practice and a little less speaking the question would have been nearer solution—but the Prime Minister had evidently forgotten that he had definitely promised English Governmental action in the matter. In August, 1889, in the debate on the Appropriation Bill, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> " . . . we have no alternative but to try and devise some new scheme by which the wants of the Catholic population shall be met."

Mr. Parnell then asked whether he proposed to embody his attempt at a solution in a Bill early in the next session, and the right hon. Gentleman replied—

> ". . . there is no possibility of dealing with this question of University education except under a Bill. Of course, I cannot give any pledge at this moment as to the exact order in which various questions will be dealt with by the Government next session."

It was clear, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman then contemplated the introduction of a Bill dealing with the question in the following session of Parliament. That solemn pledge, which Ireland was foolish enough to take seriously, was so lightly treated by the Prime Minister that he had absolutely forgotten it. For twenty-five years this question had been fought by the present Nationalist Party, and before that by the then Irish Parliamentary Party, and, he believed, still earlier by Gavan Duffy, but the climax had now been reached of a Prime Minister, supported by the largest majority the House had ever seen, declaring, although himself in favour of the Irish demand, that between him and the settlement of the question there stood the obstacle not of justice, or of reason, or of the Irish demand, or of his own opinion, or of the opinion of all enlightened men, but of the ignorance, prejudice, and intolerance of the people of Great Britain. Irishmen had urged many arguments in favour of Home Rule, but they had never adduced one so powerful as that with which the Prime Minister had now supplied them.

He regretted that a larger body of English Members had not listened to the masterly survey of the situation by the hon. Member for East Mayo. He agreed with the Prime Minister that those who were willing to give an Irish Assembly power to do certain things ought to be prepared to do those things themselves. But the foundation of the objection to the endowment of a Catholic University was that money would be given for sectarian teaching under sectarian influences. The whole principle, however, had already been given away, because, as the hon. Member for East Mayo had pointed out, £6,000 a year was given to University College, Dublin, the president of which—in whom was vested absolute control—and many professors were Jesuits. A great deal had been heard recently about Sir Antony MacDonnell. Why was it that Sir Antony MacDonnell had been able to secure so great a position in the councils of the Empire? Because he had the advantage of a University education. Without that advantage he would have been unable to obtain the high place in the Indian Civil Service examination which enabled him to begin his brilliant Indian career. There were thousands of young men growing up in Ireland who would be deprived of all chance of any such career. Was it not cruel, after the declaration of the Prime Minister fifteen years ago, that there should be a new generation of Irishmen growing up who also would be deprived of the advantage of University education through the ignorance and prejudice of the people of Great Britain?

The only fortune of most young Irishmen was their intelligence, and the climax was to be put to centuries of English misrule by refusing the facilities necessary for the proper development of their intellectual faculties. When he was at Galway, in the same college as the Attorney-General, many men were there getting a University education under the system now condemned by the heads of the Church who would have found it impossible to get a University education in England, and very difficult in Scotland. He knew very well that the poorest of the poor were unable to get higher education. He knew that side by side with the parents who were willing to send their children to Queen's College there were plenty of them who would rather deprive their children of even learning the alphabet than send them to a college which had not the approval of their own ecclesiastical advisers. There were many Catholic boys who were quite as intelligent and quick as other boys, and yet they were kept by a religious feeling and conscientious conviction from getting the advantages of a University education. He thought that was a cruel wrong to Ireland. The last half century of the denial of University education was as great a wrong to Ireland as three centuries of bad government, because it lay at the root of many evils. What was a young man to do now in Ireland? What career had he before him? However intelligent or ambitious he might be, if he were a strong Catholic with strong views he stood outside the doors of University education. There was in Ireland no commercial career open to him, and the young Irishman was compelled either to be a professional man or a Civil servant if he did not go into business, and yet, year after year, session after session, and generation after generation, they went on making this appeal, and instead of finding any relief they found the grievance existing just the same, and the obstacles thrown in the way of University education not diminishing but increasing.

The Prime Minister had now put an insuperable obstacle in the way of the concession of University education to Ireland. The only way it could be settled now, it was said, was by a measure to which all sections and Parties agreed. He thought that if the Prime Minister exercised over his Cabinet the control which he ought to exercise if he had the courage of his convictions; if he would exercise the same mercilessness in driving out of his Cabinet every enemy of education in Ireland as he had showed in regard to every enemy of protection; if he did all that and drove out of the Cabinet the representatives of the faction below the gangway and brought in a University Bill he would tell the right hon. Gentleman what would happen. He would find that he would have the votes of ten or twelve Members below the gangway from Ulster and he would not have the opposition of all the Ulster Members. He would find no opposition from the Leader of the Liberal Party in that House. True he would be confronted by the Orangemen from Ireland who call themselves Tories, and the Orangemen from England who call themselves Liberals. He thought a man was an intolerant Protestant who would not allow a Catholic to be educated in the way he desired to be educated. The right of a parent to have a child educated in his own religion was as sacred as the right to go into any church or chapel. The right hon. Gentleman upon such a measure would have the support of a large majority of his own Party, and he would be supported by all the leading Members of the Liberal Party sitting on the front Opposition Bench. He would have the support of all the Nationalist Members for Ireland, and he would be able to carry his measure far more easily than was the case with the one-sided Education Act which was passed not long ago. He held that the weakness of the right hon. Gentleman was responsible for this question not having been dealt with. To wait until all Parties brought in a Bill by consent was postponing the question until the Greek Kalends. They would never get a settlement from the right hon. Gentleman, and he did not know that they would get it from his successors, but they would press the matter on. The treatment of this question showed that this and all the other affairs of Ireland could only be satisfactorily settled by an Irish Government.

*MR. GEORGE WHITE (Norfolk, N.W.) said he felt that there were a large number of electors in this country whose voice would have a very important bearing upon the settlement of this question when their suffrages were again asked who had not been at all represented in this debate. He wished to say a few words on behalf of Free Churchmen. If this were a question of education pure and simple, he should not be found in opposition to it. He deeply sympathised with the difficulties of Ireland in regard to higher education, but the question which was forced upon them was, Is it education pure and simple, or is it the extension of the principle of endowment of denominational education of any kind? He was afraid the speech of his hon. friend had dissipated any idea they might have had that this was not the endowment of a denominational institution. It was nothing to him that University College had been set up on the lines described by his hon. friend. He was no party to the endowment of a college of that sort. He and his friends were entirely opposed to the principle of endowing a college by public funds when the governing body was composed mainly of Catholic priests. They believed the principle to be absolutely wrong, and they could not be forced into an extension of it. For thirty years he had been an earnest advocate of the rights of the Irish people to manage their own affairs, and he was prepared to carry out that principle with all the issues which were involved. He was surprised that the Prime Minister and his hon. friend did not see the essential difference between granting the great principle of liberty to a nation and allowing them to take the consequences on themselves, and taking direct action in endowing a denominational institution. Freedom to manage their own affairs would entail on the Irish people certain responsibilities. He and those who agreed with him had no responsibility in regard to what they would do with that freedom. He did not see that he was in the least inconsistent. He was prepared to let Irishmen manage their own domestic and internal affairs, and he was not afraid of what the result would be. He was perfectly prepared to take any risk involved in that course.

The position of Trinity College was no doubt very exceptional. He sympathised deeply with his Nationalist friends in their unwillingness to allow their sons to go into the atmosphere of Protestantism with which they did not agree. He thought, however, they were mistaken. Oxford and Cambridge were a few years ago saturated with Anglicanism, and, indeed, they still were, but Dissenters had sent their sons there. It was not true that they were afraid to trust their sons there. What was the result of their going to these colleges? They not only won a very large and disproportionate number of the prizes at their disposal, but they were gradually changing the atmosphere of these institutions, just as he believed their Roman Catholic friends would change the atmosphere of Trinity College, Dublin. Disabilities had to be removed before their sons had a fair chance at Oxford and Cambridge. Now they could become Fellows and Heads of Colleges. It they could be assured that University extension would be carried out in Ireland on the lines he had indicated he was quite sure that the opposition to a another University would be at once removed, and that there would be the most hearty desire to help forward that higher education which the country so richly deserved and so badly wanted.

Sir CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford) said he was entirely in accord with the Irish Party opposite on this question of education, and he would support them in the division lobby.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 263; Noes, 104. (Division List No. 139.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir Wm. Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, RtHn. Hugh. O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, RtHon. Sir H.
Baird, Jn. Geo. Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A.J. (Manch'r
Balfour, RtHn Gerald W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick Geo.
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, Sir F. T. (Windsor)
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Black, Alexander William
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bousfield, William Robert
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Sir A. H. (Shrosph.)
Brown, Geo. M. (Edinburgh)
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Burt, Thomas
Butcher, John George
Caldwell, James
Campbell, Rt Hn. J.A. (Glasgow)
Campbell, J.H.M. (Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, RtHn. J.A. (Worc.
Chamberlayne, T. (S'thampton
Channing, Francis Allston
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H.A.E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Rt. Hon. Sir John C.R.
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crombie, John William

Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, Wm. Bromley
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dixon-Hartland,SirFred Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fenwick, Charles
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.)
Finlay, SirR.B.(Inv'rn'ssB'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald,Sir Robert Penrose-
Fitzroy,Hon. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster,Philip S.(Warwick,S.W.
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Godson,Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon,Hn.J.E. (Elgin&Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Grant, Corrie
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene,Sir EW (B'rySEdm'nds
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Griffith, Ellis, J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton,Marq.of(L'nd'nderry
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, Sir J. (Staffords. N.W.)
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford,W.)
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Higham, John Sharp
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Midd.,Tottenham)

Hozier, Hon. Jas. Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jeffreys,RtHon.ArthurFred.
Kennaway,Rt.Hon.Sir John H.
Kenyon,Hon.Geo.T. (Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt.Hon.Col.W.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Kimber, Sir Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Law,AndrewBonar(Glasgow)
Lawson,Hn.H.L. W. (MileEnd)
Lawson, J. Grant (Yorks. N.R)
Lawson,SirWilfrid(Cornwall)
Lee,ArthurH.(Hants.,Fareham
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Long, Col.CharlesW.(Evesham)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas,ReginaldJ.(Portsmouth)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver,SirLewis (EdinburghW.
M'Laren, Sir CharlesBenjamin
Majendie, James A. H.
Markham, Arthur Basil
Maxwell,Rt.HnSirH.E.(Wigt'n
Maxwell,W.J.H.(Dumfriesshire
Middlemore,JohnThrogmorton
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh,N.)
Montagu, Hon.J.Scott (Hants.)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Moss, Samuel
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease,Herbert Pike(Darlington
Peel, Hon. Wm. R. Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Perks, Robert William
Pierpoint, Robert
Pirie, Duncan V.
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Pym, C. Guy
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert

Randles, John S
Rankin, Sir James
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Rickett, J. Compton
Ritchie,Rt.Hon.Chas.Thomson
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robinson, Brooke
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel,Sir HarryS.(Limehouse
Sandys,Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Abel H.(Hertford, East)
Smith,RtHnJ. Parker (Lanarks
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley,Hon.Arthur(Ormskirk)
Stanley,RtHon.Lord(Lancs.)
Stewart,SirMarkJ.M'Taggart
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strachey, Sir Edward
Stroyan, John
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby,Lt.-Col.A.C.E.(Taunton
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson,A.Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham,Mid.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd,SirW.H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse,Rt.Hn.E.R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork,N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Ambrose, Robert

Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bell, Richard
Blake, Edward

Boland, John
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Burke, E. Haviland

Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Cautley, Henry Strother
Clancy, John Joseph
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crooks, William
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Emmott, Alfred
Farrell, James Patrick
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, RtHn. HerbertJohn
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Hammond, John
Hardie,J.Keir (MerthyrTydvil)
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hope,J.F.(Sheffield, Brightside
Horniman, Frederick John
Hunt, Rowland
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy,P. J. (Westmeath,N.)
Kennedy,VincentP.(Cavan,W.
Kilbride, Denis
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.)
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. JohnP.(Galway,N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien,Kendal(TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James(Wicklow,W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare,N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, William
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon,N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Power, Patrick Joseph
Rasch, Sir Frederick Carne
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Roche, John
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Shackleton, David James
Shaw-Stewart,Sir H. (Renfrew)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Sullivan, Donal
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thompson,Dr.EC (Monagh'n,N
Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
Wallace, Robert
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason,John Cathcart (Orkney)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Young, Samuel

Tellers for the Noes—Sir Thomas Esmonde and Captain Donelan.

Main Question again proposed.

And, it being after half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

LONDON PORT AND DOCKS COMMISSION BILL [By Order].

[Second Reading.]

Order for Second Reading read.

*Mr. BENN (Devonport) said the position of the port of London was five years ago considered by the Government as so critical that they appointed a Royal Commission to inquire into and report upon it, and when he reminded the House that one-fifth of the whole of the trade of the United Kingdom passed through the port of London they would admit that this was a most important question. The matter had been neglected for 100 years because although certain powers were given nothing was done. The Report of the Commission was of a most disparaging character. The Commission reported that for one reason or another there was dissatisfaction with the condition of the port on the part of all concerned with it, whether shipowners or merchants. They reported that the river was becoming shallower as the vessels entering it were getting larger; that the docks were inadequate and that the delays in the river caused overwhelming injury to the trade of London. It was after that testimony that the Government found it necessary to take action, and he found himself now in the position of supporting the action of the Government. When he introduced the Bill the President of the Board of Trade (then Mr. Gerald Balfour) said the need for doing something was urgent, and that a bold and thorough solution, such as that put forward by the Commissioners and substantially embodied in the Government Bill, would be the one most likely to lead to useful and fruitful results. Those were the words with which the Government Bill was introduced two years ago. It was with the greatest disappointment that the London County Council had recognised that the zeal of the Government in this direction seemed to have utterly vanished. He had been informed on good authority that they would presently have to face a speech from the Government Bench against this Bill, and with regard to that he could only say they had cordially supported the efforts of the Government in the past to settle the question, not because the Bill was entirely to their satisfaction, but because they recognised in it an honest and well-directed effort to help London. They had yet to learn the reasons which caused the Government to run away from this matter when the Government held such strong opinions with regard to the Report of the Commissioners that they thought it necessary to carry over their Bill until the next session, and did not finally drop it until last year. He respectfully submitted that if the Government had really meant business there was no reason why the Government should not support this Bill and pass it into law.

The present measure was the Government Bill with two comparatively unimportant differences which could well be made the subject of discussion and settlement in Committee. The first difference was an increased representation of the London County Council on the new port authority, because the council was asked to be responsible for the financial success of the new port. The second was the exemption of goods from rates. He would not weary the House with details as to what had been done in other towns and cities. The House was aware of the highly satisfactory result of what had been done at Bristol and Liverpool in this regard.

He understood that the principal opposition to the Bill was to come from their old and venerated friend—the City—whom he saw well represented on the benches opposite, but he ventured to hope that, having produced what was practically the offspring of the Government and laid it upon the Table, the hon. Gentleman representing the Government would see fit later to own their child. So far as their hon. friends representing the City were concerned, he could only say the London County Council were not at all anxious to take this matter up, but, finding London was suffering from an inadequate and ill-managed port, they felt it their duty to take action. If the City could find the money to carry this thing through the London County Council had no jealousy of the City in the matter. It was supposed that the London County Council were anxious to poke their noses into all sorts of undertakings, and to do everything for everybody. The truth was that they were by no means anxious to take up the management of the London port and docks. If the Government were earnest and sincere in the matter let them bring in their own Bill, and the London County Council would back it rather than see the port of London as it was, ill-managed and languishing for trade. If the London County Council did not consider this a most important matter he would not be now pledging the ratepayers' money to make the port of London what they thought it ought to be. But while this House were discussing academic propositions, the business and commerce of London were going to other quarters, and going to other quarters simply because the Government had not the courage to pass their own Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Lord ALWYNE COMPTON (Bedfordshire, Biggleswade) said he did not represent the City. He interposed in the debate as a director of one of the dock companies interested, and approached the question entirely from a business point of view. It was perfectly true that when the Royal Commission was appointed in 1900 there was a certain amount of agitation against the dock companies, much of which, in his opinion, was founded on misrepresentation, which became clear as time went on. The hon. Member had spoken of the critical condition of the Port of London at the time the Royal Commission was appointed. He challenged contradiction when he said that, for the past 100 years private enterprise, without any municipal help, had managed the London port, with the result that it was to-day the finest port in the world, capable of docking the largest ships in the world, and instead of languishing for trade, as the hon. Member described it, its tonnage had doubled during the last thirty years. The Royal Commission which sat in 1900 produced a Report in 1901 that had the merit of being unanimous, in which it was recommended that a port authority, consisting of representatives of the London County Council, the City Corporation, and shipowners should be created for the purpose of acquiring and controlling the existing dock companies; that £4,500,000 should be exended on the extension of the docks; that £2,500,000 should be provided by the London County Council for the dredging of the river, and that that body should also guarantee the interest upon the new port stock to be created for purchasing the docks. Then came the Government Bill announced in 1902, and which in 1903 was mentioned in the King's Speech as of national concern which stated the importance attached to the matter. That Bill was read a second time. The hon. Member was anxious to know why the Government Bill, founded upon these recommendations, had been allowed to drop. The reason was that a number of people interested in the port had discovered that it was not so good a measure as they had at first been led to imagine. The wharfingers found that they were not being fairly treated, and there was a great deal of opposition to it, and Member after Member rose up and asked the Government to withdraw it. They knew their own business, which required a great amount of experience to carry on successfully; and they doubted very much the ability of a collection of amateurs—whose qualifications for sitting upon a port authority was to grind their own axe, to look after their own interests—to carry on the trade of the port with a satisfactory result.

The hon. Gentleman who moved the Second Reading stated that the Bill was in principle the same as the Government Bill; but in his humble judgment it differed from the Government Bill in important and essential particulars. In the first place, there was a vast difference in the compensation provisions; secondly, the financial provisions were entirely different; and thirdly, the constitution for the new port authority was entirely different. As to the compensation provisions, he was astonished at the extraordinary ideas of the County Council in regard to the value of existing debentures. He had always understood that a debenture was a legal debt on a solvent company; and it was actually suggested in the Bill that the value which the debenture holders were to receive for their debentures was to be decided by arbitration. As to the financial provisions, he did not know what was the opinion of the County Council as to the value of those undertakings which were to be taken over. He did not suppose that the County Council realised that the companies possessed three square miles of freehold property in the City of London. He did not suggest any value for that property himself, but in addition £4,500,000 were required for dock extension, and £2,500,000 for deepening the river. The hon. Member for Battersea professed to be a man of common sense; but did the hon. Gentleman know where the income was to come from to meet all this? He believed that the County Council would find themselves insolvent at the very commencement, save only that they had the rates behind them. Therefore, they were solemnly entering upon this undertaking, knowing perfectly well that it must at the outset be a heavy burden on the ratepayers of London. He believed that the whole thing was a "try on," and he could not understand how anybody who had considered the question from a finanical point of view could have commended this Bill in the light and airy manner of the hon. Gentleman.

Then, as to the constitution of the authority. The Royal Commission assigned to the County Council eleven members out of forty; the Government Bill gave them eight or nine; but the Council, with characteristic modesty, gave themselves twenty-four.

Mr. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): They have to find all the money.

Lord ALWYNE COMPTON said he would put this point to the hon. Member. How about the labour question? They would, of course, be responsible for the labour bill at the docks, which amounted to something like £4,000,000 a year. With all respect, he doubted whether it would be wise that such a body as the hon. Gentleman proposed should have the control of such a huge labour bill. Speaking for himself, he was inclined to think that the work could be carried on commercially without municipal or political control, and that the Thames Conservancy, strengthened and fostered by the Government, and with the assistance of the dues on goods entering the port, as recommended by the Royal Commission and adopted by the Government, would be a better authority to deal with all the difficulties of the case.

Mr. ALBAN GIBBS (London) said he desired to second the rejection of the Bill. As a Member for the City of London as well as for himself, he viewed with grave fear the taking away of the management of the port of London from the very able men who were thoroughly conversant with its intricate and complicated business, and the handing of the control over to another body which knew nothing about the business or the administration. He had another objection, viz., that the proper position of the City of London was not recognised in the Bill. With the exception of Westminster, the City had the greatest rateable value of any other section of the area of London; it was there that all the shipowners and merchants who used the port were to be found. In his opinion the Corporation of the City of London ought to have, if not the controlling voice on the committees, at least a great share of authority. In the Government Bill the controlling interest in the committees was given to shipowners and merchants; but that had been entirely altered in the present Bill which centred the whole administration in the County Council. Then, by the Government Bill the wharfingers had a representation of four on the committee; now they had no representation at all. There were also no powers in the Government Bill to make wharves and buy land to compete with the wharfingers; but that new clause had been introduced into this Bill. Again, the Royal Commission recommended that the dock warehouses should be got rid of as soon as possible. There was nothing about that in this Bill or in the Government Bill; but the Government Bill provided that a separate committee should be formed, on which the wharfingers should be represented, to work the warehouses. He agreed with his noble friend that since the Bill of two years ago a very great change of opinion had occurred, and he thought that the Government last year exercised a very wise discretion in not bringing forward that Bill again. He trusted that the Government would not allow this Bill to pass without giving it more consideration. There were many other matters not dealt with in the Bill, such as a great barrage system on the river. He did not profess to be an engineer, but he believed that many competent people argued that such a system could be worked satisfactorily. He, therefore, asked the House to reject the Bill.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'" — (*Lord Alwyne Compton.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said that the two speeches just delivered were only directed against the details of the Bill. Indeed, it was impossible for any representative of the City to object to the principle, because the Corporation of the City a year or two ago supported the principle of the measure, and proposed to finance the dock question. Everybody who had read the Report of the Royal Commission knew that it would be impossible to hand over this great question to the Thames Conservancy, which was a body not intended for this work; and the proposal of the dock companies that they should have a guarantee of 4 per cent. on their stock before they began to improve the docks was out of the question. It seemed to him, therefore, that as some authority had to take action it was the duty of the London County Council to make a proposal for the solution of the difficulty. All that his hon. friend desired was that the House should endorse the principle of the Bill by giving it a Second Reading, which principle was that the docks and waterways of the Port of London should be under some public authority.

LORD ALWYNE COMPTON: What about the financial details?

*MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said that the value of the docks and of the debentures could be decided on fair lines in Committee upstairs. He was quite sure that the Committee would do no injustice to the shareholders or debenture holders.

LORD ALWYN COMPTON said what he wanted to know was how the undertaking was to be carried on after it had been purchased.

*MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said that what they were deciding by reading the Bill a second time was that the undertaking was to be carried on by a public authority instead of by private companies. He represented a constituency which had a larger proportion of docks than any other in the London area; and he felt strongly that the Government had no right to raise this question if they did not intend to settle it. For five years the trade of the port had been largely paralysed. The noble Lord said that the dock companies had been improving the trade of the port last year. That was in spite of, and not in consequence of, the action of the Government. He did not throw any blame on the dock companies themselves. They, as directors, had to attend to the interests of shareholders. They had reduced their expenditure in the last few years so far as they could, and they had raised their charges to the highest possible figure, the result being that, along with the uncertainty, the port of London had very materially suffered.

It was necessary to recall what had taken place in regard to this question. The noble Lord opposite said this question was very much due to the agitation against the dock companies. On the contrary, it was the dock companies themselves who raised the question. Five years ago they introduced a Bill in order to enable them to carry out absolutely essential improvements in their docks, which ought to have been carried out many years ago; and they came to this House and said they had not got sufficient revenue to do the work, and asked to be allowed to raise charges, and especially, as the Commission pointed out, to tax their rivals in trade. The House threw out the Dock Companies Bill and appointed a Royal Commission to enquire into the matters. The Royal Commission reported with unusual celerity, and the Government with unusual promptitude introduced a Bill, the Second Reading of which was agreed to after one day's discussion without a division. Certain opposition had subsequently developed from the Members for the City and the then chairman of the Thames Conservancy. But he thought the hon. Members for the City would allow him to say that if it had been a question of the Bill going on they would not have desired to have appeared as obstructionists, and the Amendment they put down would not have seriously delayed the passage of the Bill. If the Government had been in earnest about the measure, and had given one or two days to it in the first session, it would have passed and become law. The Government, however, did nothing of the sort, and made the unusual proposal that the Bill should be carried over to the next session. He believed there was no precedent for it, but the House agreed to the proposal on the ground that the question, having once been decided, ought to be settled. But the Government did nothing whatever the next session; and through the whole of two sessions, had only devoted one day to its consideration, and were consequently very much to blame for the present position. The dock companies, too, had very great cause of complaint at the position in which they had been placed. He quite agreed with the chairman of the dock company, who a short time ago said that an cct of great injustice was being done to the companies by the way in which legislation was hanging over their heads, and that a very serious injury was being done to the port of London by the uncertainty engendered.

The noble Lord who had spoken that evening objected to the principle of the Bill. He (Mr. Buxton) was prepared to stand on the Report of the Royal Commission, who said that, in spite of the great natural advantages of the Thames and of the port, compared with other ports, it was dear, slow, and vexatious, that its accommodation was altogether inadequate, and that the waterway required a considerable amount of dredging. The Royal Commission further said—and this was really the gist of the present Bill—that it was essential, if the dredging were to be carried out satisfactorily and the dock accommodation put in a proper state, that in the first place the port should be treated as a whole under a public authority, and secondly that the only way to do it was to have something in the way of rates behind it in order that it might be able to raise its capital under proper conditions. The noble Lord opposite said that the dock companies would have been able to carry out this work themselves.

Lord ALWYNE COMPTON: Under cettain conditions.

***Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON**: The Chairman of the London Dock, Company, in giving evidence before the Royal Commission, said the Government ought to proceed vigorously if they were going to deal with the question. They could not, he said, let the matter stand as it was at present. For good or for evil they had the verdict of the Royal Commission, and something had to be done. So long as the verdict stood it was impossible for any dock company to face any large expenditure of capital knowing that in a very short time they might be bought out and could not possibly receive an equivalent for the capital they spent. This meant, as he (Mr. Buxton) had said, that at the present moment, thanks to the action of the Government, the port of London was largely paralysed. That being so it was essential that somebody should take up the question. Further the Royal Commission pointed out that unless something were done very speedily Antwerp, Hamburg, and Rotterdam, and other rival ports, would largely increase their trade at our expense, and he confessed to reading with very grave concern a report from the British Consul issued two or three days ago in regard to the trade at Antwerp. The Consul said that the port of of Antwerp had made progress both as regarded the number of vessels and the total tonnage, and that the port authorities there were keeping pace in the highest possible degree with the demands of maritime traffic. The question of rivalry was more important than the actual efficiency of the port of London itself. His opinion was that the question, having been raised, ought to be settled rapidly, otherwise they would find not only that the trade of the port would diminish but that its rivals would before very long take away a great deal of its trade. As the Government declined to move in the matter it was the bounden duty of the London County Council to raise the question, and in the way they had done. He frankly admitted he did not agree with the proposal of the constitution proposed in the Bill. The County Council, he believed, would agree that the number of representatives that they proposed was excessive, and would leave that and other details to the Committee. He was quite convinced that the last five years had done a very great deal to injure the trade of the port of London, and unless the matter were settled satisfactorily the trade of the port would continue to fall off and that of its rivals would continue to increase.

Mr. H. LAWSON, (Tower Hamlets, Mile End) hoped that the length of years which had elapsed since he had last addressed the House had established a reintegration of his claims to the indulgence shown to a new Member. He certainly had not come back there to throw stones at the London County Council of which he had the honour to be a member for many years. He believed that no more vital blow could be aimed at the administrative efficiency of the London County Council than to allow this Bill to become law. The hon. Member for Poplar had said that the principle of the Bill was to establish a public authority for dealing with the affairs of the port of London. The hon. Member would forgive him for saying it was nothing of the sort. Many of those who opposed the Bill were in favour of a public authority. He himself would go further and say he would like to see a public authority backed by national finance such as had enabled the Dutch, Belgian, and German ports to attain their present position. The proposal of this Bill, however, was to make the London County Council the port authority for London, and to make the rates of London not only the basis, but the constant support of its finance. Only two things could be postulated—the local authority's sublime ignorance of dock management and the certainty of increased expenditure on the existing service. Though the existing service would be in itself a heavy burden, the House had been reminded by his noble friend that there were many other charges which must fall on the new authority. Whatever might be said of the London County Council, it must be admitted that it had not been illiberal to labour, and just as there had been constant concessions to their present employees, so there would be much larger concessions to the legions now under the management of the dock companies. Even in the case of the tramways there had been constant agitation and concessions to the employees, and at the docks the County Council would have to deal with a highly organised body of men who ever since the strike of 1889 had exercised a great influence on the port of London, and who were perfectly certain to obtain a rising scale of wages. The County Council had surely sufficient to its hand. Its functions were ever increasing. A member had to attend daily in Spring Gardens to fulfil his duties. How was he to find time for the difficult task of managing the docks? It was all very well to say that nothing had happened since a Docks Bill was introduced. A great deal had happened to the London County Council—it had become the education authority for London.

Mr. BENN: Reluctantly.

Mr. JOHN BURNS: We did not want it.

Mr. H. LAWSON said he would not quarrel about a word. At any rate they had become the education authority, and it had added largely to the labours of the London County Council. Many of its members, in addition, were on boards of guardians and borough councils, besides having large private businesses to concern them. Two-thirds of the members were seeking seats in Parliament, and some had already arrived. If its members were going to be overburdened by the work of administration under this Bill, what about the ratepayers they represented, who were going to be overburdened by the finance? It must be remembered that this was not going to be a remunerative undertaking. The Royal Commission stated in its Report that the existing revenue would not do more than pay the interest on the new dock stock to debenture holders and shareholders, but the Royal Commission provided for an extra revenue to be derived from goods brought into the port by lighter and landed at the wharves. The London County Council repudiated that source of revenue—quite rightly, he thought, for these extra dues would be a very heavy burden on the manufactures of London—but that repudiation deprived them of the additional revenue open to them. Seventy-five per cent. of the goods discharged in London were delivered by lighter. £25,000,000 to £30,000,000 would have to be borrowed for the purpose, and on March 31st, 1904, the consolidated stock of the London County Council stood at £58,750,000, and the debt of London as a whole was very much larger. The only recourse, then, for the money to be spent on the docks was the pockets of the ratepayers, and, that being so, the finance of the Bill failed hopelessly. He did not know whether the hon. Member for Poplar was prepared to inflict on that borough, which was now paying 12s. in the £ for rates, a part of the new burden which would be incurred by the new docks, and was estimated by the Royal Commission at £7,000,000.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON said in his opinion there would be no extra charge through the docks, and there would be a great deal more employment in his constituency if this matter were not hung up indefinitely.

Mr. H. LAWSON said the London County Council would not charge upon goods brought into the free water which they prized so highly, and therefore they could get the money in no other way than by burdening the ratepayers. The whole Bill rested on the urgency of the case, but he thought that the urgency had been very much exaggerated. Short-sea traders did not complain to the Royal Commission of the present conditions, and long-sea traders confined themselves mainly to pressing for a better channel for big steamers. It looked as if the agitation had been engineered for a time by the merchants, but the whole spirit had gone out of it since the Royal Commission reported. Other ports had progressed more speedily than London, but London had, nevertheless, increased its tonnage entry in fifteen years by 60 per cent., and was, therefore, not doing badly. Southampton in this country and Hamburg and Antwerp abroad were the main examples, but Southampton Docks had been developed by the private enterprise of a railway company, and the others were to some extent ports of call. If the House were of opinion that in the national interest larger facilities ought to be afforded then he thought it could only be done in fairness to the people of London by something in the nature of a national guarantee. After all, the whole thing was largely a question of dredging the river. Sir Thomas Sutherland, said it was only a question of spending £2,500,000. That ought not to be beyond the resources of the dock companies. He was not against the principle of establishing a public body, but there was no ground for urging this counsel of despair. Certainty as an old member of the London County Council he could imagine nothing more calculated to diminish the efficiency of its work, and as a London Member he could not contemplate with equanimity the fated and fatal increase of rates which was driving trade out of the metropolitan boundaries. He therefore hoped, while not in the least declaring himself against the principle of public control, that the House would refuse to read the Bill a second time.

Mr. JOHN BURNS said times had changed since 1889, when he had the honour of fighting in a pleasant way the battle of the dock strike, and he did not think at that time that his name would be on the back of a Bill for creating a dock trust for London. What was more, in the interval of the sixteen years the dock directors would be the first to admit that never by word or speech had he assailed their management from the point of view of a councillor or Labour Member, and never had he been on any but the friendliest of terms with those who sixteen years ago he had the honour of being an industrial opponent of. He was supporting this Bill not for the purpose of making any attack on the dock managers of London, but because he looked upon them as bold men struggling with adversity, and out of pity for their position and sympathy for their difficulties he desired to help thom.

The object of the Bill was to carry out the desire and intention of the Government. In the last five years dangerous competitors with the Port of London had sprung up where ten years ago they were not the least suspected. No one could read the Foreign Office and Consular Reports without being convinced that with ports like Hamburg, Antwerp, Bremen, and others to compete with it the international trade of the port of London was not where it was five years or ten years ago. [" Free trade."] But for free trade the docks would have been closed, and the Stock Exchange asking for a parade to collect subscriptions for them. But the port was not making the strides that it ought to make Nature had given London the finest commercial river in the world, with two tides up and two tides down, on which they could get the cheapest lighterage to be found anywhere, and with a huge market as its basis. And yet though nature had blessed London, obsolescence of men, machinery, and plant was cursing it. The docks, though not so bad as the opponents of the companies declared, were capable of immense improvement, but it was impossible for the dock companies to improve their position so long as they were assaulted intermittently by Government Departments and by faddists and interested persons. He stood there asking for the municipalisation of the London docks, not on the initiative and at the request of the County Council, but in default of the Government's carrying out its own programme of three years ago. The agitation about the docks and port was not initiated by the County Council, or set up by ignorant misrepresentation. In 1892, before the present controversy arose, *The Times* said—

> "The basis on which this article starts is a matter of common agreement: it is the deplorable and incontrovertible fact that no port of any considerable size in the United Kingdom is so grossly mismanaged as the port of London. One thing, however, is reasonably certain; it is that, if any body of men, either the Corporation or the City, or the dock companies, or the Chamber of Commerce would take the trouble to push forward a scheme for the formation of a public trust to control and manage the whole of the port of London, that body of men would receive the support and the gratitude of the entire mercantile community, with the exception, perhaps, of some wharfingers, traditionally opposed to reform, who would find some difficulty in carrying on their business profitably if the dock rates were as low as under economical management they would almost certainly be."

The reasons for the backwardness of the London port given by *The Times* in 1892 existed to-day in a stronger form. If hon. Members would go down to the docks they would see ancient methods, inefficient gear, and insufficient accommodation, while the desire of the dock companies to alter this condition of affairs was prevented by their poverty and the refusal of the Government to give them the help they ought to have extended years ago. He could cite the testimony of wharfingers, shippers, the Royal Commission, and others proving beyond the shadow of a doubt that the port and docks of London were not so good as they ought to be. It was all very well for the City to oppose the London County Council. If only the Corporation would suppress its municipal rivalry, the two bodies, if shut up in a Committee room, would be almost unanimously in favour of the substance of the present Bill. Were they to allow the dock companies to go on with insufficient capital, with lack of Parliamentary powers, were they to allow the City to be always opposing the County Council, and was Parliament to be afraid to tackle this question in a truly Imperial manner?

In the matter of ocean supremacy and riverside efficiency this Government of Great Britons were the smallest possible Little Englanders; they were smitten with "the craven fear of being great," and they had neglected the docks and the river to an extent which was deplorable from every point of view. If something had to be done and the Government would not do it, who was to undertake the task? Private enterprise was crippled; Parliament would not allow the City Corporation, with only one square mile out of the 119 in London, to enter upon an expenditure of £30,000,000 or £40,000,000 for this purpose; they would not permit the Thames Conservancy to do it, although that body had immensely improved under the new chairmanship; and they would not entrust the duty to the County Council. He himself was only a municipal Socialist, but the hon. Member for Mile End really out-heroded Herod, for he was a collectivist, an Imperial Socialist, and wanted to make the poor Irishman and Scotsman bear a share of the burden by guaranteeing Imperial finances for a local port. ["A national port."] Then what about Liverpool, Glasgow, and Hull? If hon. Members were prepared to nationalise all the ports of the United Kingdom he would withdraw the Bill at once. But what was to be done with the docks and port of London? The companies could not overcome the difficulties by which they were confronted, and the Government showed no desire to help them. Instead of having 23,000,000 or 24,000,000 tons going up and coming out of the river, they had only 17,000,000. Other ports were rapidly taking part of the trade. To avert this the County Council were called in. They did not take the initiative, but they made up their minds that they would, if reluctantly, accept this task rather than allow the docks to go to the dogs. What was to be done? Parliament threw out the Dock Companies' Bill it would throw out the Thames Conservancy Bill, it would not have a City Bill, and it had decided to vote against the County Council Bill. Was it going to tell the companies to reorganise their capital, reconstitute their financial conditions, ask for power to spend money which they would have difficulty in getting, and then promise to back them with the rates or Imperial funds? No; the Government would treat the dock companies even worse than they treated the County Council. As a Londoner, who was fond of the river and proud of the port, and desired to see them improved, he protested against this treatment, and declared it to be such as the House of Commons ought no longer to sanction.

What was the objection to the Bill? It could not be on the ground of finance, because it was proposed to refer the interests of debenture holders to arbitration. The objection was raised that the County Council proposed not to put dues on goods, or proposed to put them on in a particular way. That, he maintained, was not a matter for the House on the Second Reading, but for the Committee upstairs to deal with. It was objected that the Bill would create a new municipal authority; but precedents all pointed to municipally-managed ports being in a better condition for the shipowners and traders than the port of London was now in. The question of representation could be dealt with by the Committee upstairs. The reasons the County Council asked for so large a proportion were those advanced by the President of the Board of Trade himself, viz., that they found the money and guaranteed the stock upon the rates. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "The County Council cannot be protected from financial incompetence on the part of the new authority unless the County Council have a majority."

And he added—

> "That is out of the question."

There would be no objection to the City having a larger representation if they advanced the money, but they did nothing of the kind, and therefore were not entitled to larger representation than anybody else. The dock companies shareholders held that Parliament ought to, and the County Council might do, more for the port. The County Council had done and was doing all that it could. Besides the £2,500,000 for deepening the river, they had spent or were spending £2,250,000 on the Rotherhithe Tunnel, £3,000,000 on the Blackwall Tunnell, and £500,000 on Woolwich Ferry. ["What has that to do with the port and docks?"] It was impossible for the docks to be efficiently worked and goods to be got out and in quickly unless the river was deepened and the approaches widened and improved, and as their contribution towards that improvement the County Council were doing everything that could reasonably be expected of them. Hamburg spent £9,000,000 in improving her docks and port, with the result that in twenty years the tonnage of Hamburg had jumped up from 3,000,000 to 9,000,000. The present management of the London docks was inefficient, antiquated, and obsolete. If the port in the course of two or three years met with more serious rivalry the House must blame, not the County Council, but the lack of courage of this Imperial Government, surrounded, as it was, by a small knot of City obscurantists who were jealous of the County Council. If the Bill were not passed the County Council would wash their hands of the responsibility. If, as he predicted it would be, labour in the East End was confronted with greater difficulties within the next five or six years, the responsibility would rest on this unimaginative, irresponsible, and cowardly Government, who, having introduced a Port Bill two years ago, rejected a replica of it when it was presented to the House.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BONAR LAW, Glasgow, Blackfriars) said this subject had occupied a great deal of the time of the Department with which he was connected, and there had been much said on both sides in the present debate with which he disagreed. He did not think, however, that any good purpose would be served by going into those points, and he would confine himself to giving one or two reasons why he strongly held that this Bill should not be read a second time. The first consideration that occurred in connection with the Bill was that the object with which it dealt was far too large to be treated in a private Bill. It was unnecessary to labour that point, but he might remind the House that the area affected by the Bill was so large that it returned over 100 Members to this House, and private Bill procedure would not give all those Members an opportunity of discussing the proposals put forward.

On its merits, too, he thought the Bill was highly objectionable. He did not think there was any hostile feeling towards the County Council. If such a thing did exist at any rate he did not share it. He was bound to say that through all the stages in dealing with the Government the representatives of the County Council showed themselves extremely moderate and reasonable. They really seemed to him to be actuated solely with a desire to present as good a Bill as they could; but that moderation disappeared when they introduced their own Bill. He did not agree that these things were matters of detail where the County Council Bill disagreed with the Government measure. It was true that in form this was a duplicate of the Government Bill, but in principle it was diametrically opposed to it. The principle of the Government Bill was to create a strong port authority and to give it practically unlimited control over the port of London. But the principle was largely embodied in the way in which the committee should be composed, and it was hardly possible to imagine a worse body than that created under this Bill. The principle which should be adopted was the good old rule that the men who paid the piper should call the tune.

MR. JOHN BURNS: Hear, hear!

MR. BONAR LAW asked who would pay the piper in this case. Those who would contribute to the revenue of London were the payers of dues on goods or on shipping. They would be directly interested if the port was well managed and would suffer if it was badly managed. In this Bill, however, it was proposed that the authority should be in the hands of the County Council; and so long as the port paid its way it would not be directly affected; it would not benefit by good management nor suffer by bad management. If a proper Bill were introduced there would be no danger of the rates of London being called upon. Why should London differ from other ports, like Glasgow or Liverpool? If it was a good principle that those who paid the rates should control the expenditure it was broken in this instance. London had a much larger market than other ports, and whether the port of London was well managed or ill managed it would have to pay its own way. He could not understand why the Council had left out of this Bill the power to levy dues on goods unless it was to make it possible that they should be able to fall back on the rates. It had been calculated that if the same dues on goods were levied in London as were levied at Liverpool there would be an additional revenue of £1,000,000 a year to the port of London. What was wanted in a port authority of of this kind? There was no question involved of a political or religious character, and it was simply a question of pounds, shillings, and pence. What was the best class of men to manage these affairs? Obviously the best business men. Were they more likely, as proposed in the Government Bill, to allow business men who paid the dues to elect their own representatives, or to get them out of the representatives of the County Council? He thought that this was a vital point in the Bill. Glasgow and Liverpool elected business men who paid the dues, and their reputation as business men was the safeguard. They were the pick of the business men of those two places. Was that the qualification that secured the election of members of the County Council?

MR. JOHN BURNS said the London Chamber of Commerce supported the Bill. There were better business men at Spring Gardens than on the Treasury Bench.

MR. BONAR LAW said the qualifications of members of the London County Council were much the same as the qualifications of Members of that House. One of the things that secured their election was the power of making good speeches. That was a good thing, but it was not what was wanted for the port authority. He remembered reading a long time ago an essay in which the writer pointed out that everyone read the Philippics of Demosthenes, but nobody remembered that Philip was right and Demosthenes was wrong. He would take as an illustration the hon. Member for Battersea—he would not take himself as an illustration, because it would be too ambitious. Supposing the hon. Member for Battersea was a member of the Port trust, and that the chairman was one of the numerous Members of the House who had the reputation, and deserved it, of being good business men but hardly ever opened their mouths, if a dispute arose between the hon. Member for Battersea and the chairman, whom would the betting be on? The chairman would be nowhere, but he might be right and the hon. Member for Battersea wrong.

MR. JOHN BURNS said he would always be found supporting a business man.

MR. BONAR LAW said only good business men were wanted. In the case he had mentioned good business men would support the chairman and not the orator. What was wanted was the good business man, and nothing either more or less. It was a fact that in the Bill of the London County Council it was suggested that a certain number of men should be elected. But what class of business men did they think would accept nomination to a board constituted in the manner proposed? They would have no authority, they would simply form one of a body which would be nothing more nor less than a sub-committee of the London County Council. He would rather vote for a Bill to transfer the whole dock authority of London to the County Council. That would be an intelligible proposal. If they were to have the authority, let them, at least, have the responsibility. That would be better than constituting a mongrel body like this which would have no authority whatever except that derived from the London County Council. The Government had invariably adopted the policy of refraining from exercising Government pressure in regard to a private Bill, and they would not put on the Government tellers; but, speaking for the Board of Trade, he strongly urged the House not to read this Bill a second time.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.) said that as a member of the Thames Conservancy he wished to correct an impresssion which seemed to have been sedulously brought before the House by the speakers who had supported this Bill. With no intention to mislead the House, the hon. Member for Battersea endeavoured to convince hon. Members that if the trade of the port of London was not decreasing it was in a parlous condition. What were the figures? The figures were so remarkable, both as to the actual increase and the comparative increase, that he hoped his hon. friend would allow him to endeavour to convince him. He would give figures to show the increase of the trade of the Port in the last five years. In 1900 the trade was, roughly speaking, 22,857,000 tons. In 1904 it was 25,700,000 tons, or an increase of about 3,000,000 tons in a port which, according to the hon. Member for Devonport, was "inadequate, ill-managed, and languishing for trade."

MR. BENN said he merely quoted from the Report of the Royal Commission.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said the hon. Member used those words, and they were not to be found in the Report. He had described the trade of the port of London as languishing, whereas that trade had actually increased by 3,000,000 tons in five years. What was the comparative increase as compared with the principal ports of the United Kingdom? Taking the period between 1894 and 1904 the increase at Liverpool had been 28 per cent.; the Tyne ports, 15 per cent.; Glasgow, 29 per cent.; Hull, 17 per cent.; Bristol, 16 per cent.; and Southampton, on a small total, 40 per cent.; while the increase had been no less than 32 per cent. in the port of London. The increase of trade in this languishing port of London was the highest percentage but one of all the ports of the United Kingdom.

MR. JOHN BURNS: What about Hamburg?

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said he had been unable to obtain the figures for

Hamburg, but he had been told that the trade of the port of Hamburg was about 9,000,000 tons, and the trade of the port of London was 25,000,000. The hon. Member was very fond of saying in reference to fiscal questions that percentages should not be counted, and that you should go upon the actual increases. He was ready to adopt that standard of comparison. A large percentage on a small trade could not be shown to be more important than a small percentage on a large trade. The trade of the port of London had increased to a greater extent, both as regarded its percentage and actual increase, than that of any other port in the United Kingdom, and to a far greater extent than that of the port of Hamburg. He hoped that this Bill would not be revived in any subsequent discussion in the House.

The whole case for the purchase of the docks had been argued upon the assumption that the greater part of the trade of London was done in the docks, and the whole argument of the noble Lord the Member for Bedford had been that if the docks were purchased and handed over to the London County Council they would be practically placing under the control of that body the trade of the port of London. He wished to remind hon. Members that they would be doing no such thing. It was not the case that the greater part of the trade of London was done in the docks. The percentage of the trade carried on in the docks was only 40 per cent. The remaining 60 per cent. was handled in the river; and as the system of wharves and jetties expanded, as it was expanding, the dues received from them would form a valuable addition to the income of the Thames Conservancy. He complained that the Government Departments which sent representatives to the Conservancy did not give them of the best material at their command, and appealed to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade to supply them, not with time-worn material, but with the best possible kind of Civil servant he could give them. The revenues of the Conservancy were not fully adequate to the whole of the task set before them; but if they had the power they would not make the mistake being made by the County Council in this Bill, and ask for fresh revenue from the shipping, but they would ask for it from the goods. In every other port the dues charged were on ships and goods, and that system had been found commercially sound. He could not understand why the County Council had omitted all charges on goods from the Bill, for such charges must be the profitable source of income.

*Mr. **DAVID MORGAN** (Essex, Walthamstow) said that for over twenty years he had been a director of one of the London dock companies; and as a merchant and a large payer of dues to the docks he was convinced that this Bill was not only absolutely unnecessary, but would increase the charges in the port of London enormously or else impose a heavy burden on the ratepayers. The docks might well be left to work out their own salvation. He was perfectly certain from his experience that no Committee or Commission with a large proportion of members of the London County Council upon it could give the same care and attention to the spending of the money which would be required to efficiently manage and work the docks as a body of business men who had been brought up to the work all their lives. The Liverpool representatives on the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board consisted entirely of men who understood the business, and they were people who paid the dues. There was no necessity to ask the ratepayers of London to find £30,000,000 to purchase the docks. The present port authority had done much better lately, and they had begun to look more after the requirements of the port. As long as they did all that was required he did not think there was any need to ask the ratepayers of London to find this enormous amount of money.

Mr. PEEL (Manchester, S.) said that as one of the members of the Royal Commission he could not support the Bill. The Commission was unanimously of opinion that the management of the docks should rather be committed to a board representing all the interests concerned than to the municipal authority. There were reasons affecting the port of London which made it infinitely more important that such a body should not be set up in London than anywhere else. The hon. Member for Battersea said he considered the question of the proposed number of members of the London County Council a matter of detail. Would he agree to reduce that number from twenty-four to eight or nine, as was proposed by the Government last year? He was perfectly certain that the hon. Member would not accept that challenge, because he regarded it as one of the main principles of this Bill.

Mr. JOHN BURNS said he was quite prepared to leave that matter to the Committee.

Mr. PEEL said the measure had no chance of going to a Committee, but he felt sure that the hon. Member would not accept a diminution in the number of members of the London County Council, although he had stated that it was merely a matter of detail. The only effect of a Bill of this character would be to drive away trade from the Port of London to Liverpool, Bristol, Newcastle, and other ports. The shipping trade was a very sensitive and slippery article, and if it was not very carefully handled it could be very easily driven to some other port.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 123; Noes, 191. (Division List No. 140.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bell, Richard
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Burke, E. Haviland
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Doogan, P. C.
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Elibank, Master of
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Findlay, Alexander (Lanark, NE
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant Corrie
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Holland, Sir William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael

Kennedy, P. J. (Westmeath,N.)
Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan,W
Kilbride, Denis
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Levy, Maurice
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Moss, Samuel
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Doherty, William
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Partington, Oswald
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roche, John
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Spencer,Rt Hn.C.R.(Northants
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thompson,Dr.EC (Monagh'n,N
Toulmin, George
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason,John Cathcart (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Young, Samuel

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Benn and Mr. John Burns.

NOES.

Acland-Hood,Capt.Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster,Rt Hn.HughO.
Arrol, Sir William
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hon.SirH.
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A.J.(Manch'r
Balfour,RtHn.GeraldW.(Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Sir Alex. H. (Shropsh.)
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Chamberlain,RtHn.J.A.(Worc.
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H.A.E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colomb, Rt.Hon.Sir John C. R.
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig,CharlesCurtis(Antrim,S.)
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale,Rt.Hon.Sir Joseph C.
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dixon-Hartland,SirFred Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Dyke,Rt.Hon.Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Emmott, Alfred
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay,SirR.B.(Inv'rn'ssB'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Fitzroy,Hon. Edward Algernon
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster,Philip S.(Warwick,S.W.
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Godson,Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon,Hn.J.E.(Elgin& Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon,Maj.Evans (T'rH'mlets
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby
Goschen,Hon. George Joachim
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Henry D.(Shrewsbury)
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey,Rt.Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton,Marq.of(L'nd'nderry
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir ArthurD.
Heath,Sir James(Staffords.NW
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford,W.)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse,C.E.H.(Bristol,E.)
Hope, J.F.(Sheffield,Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Hozier,Hon.James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennaway,Rt.Hon.Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt.Hon.Col.W.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson ,Hn.H.L.W.(Mile End)
Lawson, J. Grant (Yorks, N.R.
Lee,ArthurH.(Hants.,Fareham
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Long,Col. Charles W.(Evesham
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther,RtHnJ.W (Cum.Penr.
Lucas,ReginaldJ.(Portsmouth)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
Majendie, James A. H.
Markham, Arthur Basil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell,RtHn.SirH.E.(Wigt'n
Maxwell,W.J.H.(Dumfriesshire
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Montagu, Hon.J.Scott(Hants.)
Moon,EdwardRobert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan,DavidJ.(Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Peel, Hn.Wm.RobertWellesley
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pirie, Duncan V.
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George

Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederick Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, RtHnJ.Parker (Lanarks
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stock, James Henry
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt.Hn.J.G.(Oxf'dUniv.
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomkinson, James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col. A.C.E.(Taunton
Welby, Sir Charles G.E.(Notts.)
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Lord Alwyne Compton and Mr. Alban Gibbs.

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Second Reading put off for six months.

SUPPLY COMMITTEE.

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [April 13th], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair (for Committee on Civil Services and Revenue Departments Estimates)."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

Question again proposed.

*Mr. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.) rose to call attention to Acts relating to the safe working of, and the prevention of accidents upon, railways, and to the hours of labour of railway servants; and to move a Resolution. He said he would not apologise for raising the question in this form. During the present session a large number of hon. Members who desired to bring forward Resolutions had been interested in the ballot for places, and although be had been desirous of bringing this question before the House on one of the evenings allotted to private Members he had not been successful in the ballot. In his opinion matters affecting the life and limb of railway servants, and especially the excessive hours which in many instances, servants still worked, were of very much greater importance than many of the questions which had lately been discussed in the House. If those interested in this question were to wait until the Board of Trade Vote came before the House, this question would be only one of the many raised in that discussion, and the result would be, as frequent experience had shown, that a haphazard, or rather, he would say, a restricted allusion would be made to it in the reply from the representative of the Department. That would be less satisfactory than a statement made on an occasion of this kind.

Parliament had provided the Board of Trade with a great number of instruments which it had used very imperfectly and inadequately to carry out the great objects which were contemplated by legislation in connection with the safe working of railways, and the prevention of accidents to those employed. Great powers were vested in the Board of Trade in virtue of many Acts passed prior to those dealing particularly with this question, but, of course, the main Acts by which they were empowered to deal with the matters involved were those of 1889 and 1893 in relation to working hours on railways, and also the Accidents Act of 1900. What he had to say upon the whole of that legislation was that it seemed to him that since the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon left the Board of Trade there had been laxer administration and a less sympathetic attitude, and an absence of insight and initiative in regard to the protection of railway servants and the prevention of the evils arising from the excessive hours worked. This condition of affairs was extremely unsatisfactory. From a comparison of the figures for recent years he found that there had been some slight improvements, but what he had to complain of was that the main objects of the Act of 1900 still remained absolutely unfulfilled. His information might not be up to date, but he was informed that no official action had been taken with regard to the question of couplings, whether automatic or non-automatic.

From the Board of Trade Returns as to loss of life and injuries resulting from operations in coupling and uncoupling of wagons, and the marshalling of trains, he found that there had been practically no diminution whatsoever. It appeared to him that the form of the last Return of accidents had been altered in a way which made it less satisfactory than before. There was a less clear light thrown on the causes of the accidents, but so far as he could make out the figures did not show that the accidents differed materially from those which occurred before the Act of 1900 was passed. He would concentrate his attention on this particular point, and he would not quarrel with the Board of Trade in regard to matters where they had rendered valuable service under the Act. Sir Francis Hopwood was one of the greatest workers in the cause of the railway servants. and he had had a great deal to do with that admirable official in connection with the inquiries conducted in the United States as to the methods of coupling and uncoupling adopted in that country. The Report which Sir Francis Hopwood had made to the Board of Trade on the subject was of great importance. It showed the remarkable fact that since the Department which was responsible there for the safe working and administration of the railways really took the matter in hand with energy and determination immense results had been obtained in the protection of life and limb. In 1893 the number killed in America from this class of accidents was 2,727, and in four years after the initiation of legislation on the subject the mortality had been reduced to 1,693, a percentage of seventy or eighty. The number of injuries had been reduced in like proportion. Every man who knew anything of the mechanical considerations involved in this problem knew that there were very great difficulties to be solved, but at the same time those who had studied the progress of invention in relation to this problem must feel that it was one which was not mechanically incapable of being solved. The Board of Trade ought to have thrown its energies into this question with the view to arriving at a solution of it, and it was no exaggeration to say that the Board deserved the censure of the House of Commons for not having taken more active steps in that direction, and for not having approached nearer to a solution.

The reports of the Board of Trade inspectors previous to 1888 showed that the loss of life and injury to railway passengers were immensely greater than they had since been. The secret of the change was to be found in the passing of the Act of 1889, when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol was President of the Board of Trade. By that Act the Board of Trade was enabled to make the automatic brake system and the interlocking of signals and point compulsory throughout the railways of this country. This afforded a vivid illustration of the good results which could be obtained from resolute and well-considered action on definite lines. Perhaps the Secretary of the Board of Trade would be able to throw some light upon what appeared to be the inaction of the Board, but it seemed to him that a more energetic policy should be adopted by the Department.

And, it being midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

SMALL HOLDINGS BILL.

Order for resuming adjourned debate on Question [24th March], "That the Bill be now read a second time," read.

*MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.) asked leave to withdraw the measure. On account of an error of the Public Bill Office and the printers, certain Amendments had been omitted, and he was advised that the proper course to take was to withdraw the Bill and reintroduce it with the Amendments.

Bill, by leave, withdrawn.

POST OFFICE (TELEPHONE AGREEMENT).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the Agreement of the 2nd day of February, 1905, between the Postmaster-General and the National Telephone Company, and to report whether it is desirable in the public interest that the Agreement should become binding; That Mr. Beckett, Mr. Benn, Sir Horatio Davies, Mr. Helme, Sir William Holland, Mr. Morrison, Mr. Joseph Nolan, Sir Charles Renshaw, Colonel Royds, and Mr. Stuart-Wortley be members of the Committee; That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records; That Three be the quorum."—(*The Postmaster-General.*)

*MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil) objected to the Motion being passed now on the ground that the Agreement did not protect the interests of the employees, no provision having been made for their transference. No Labour representative was on the Committee to look after the interest of the employees.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton) expressed the hope that the first part of the Motion would be agreed to. The constitution of the Committee could be considered afterwards.

*MR. KEIR HARDIE agreed to the suggestion.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick) objected to the whole of the Motion.

The Motion was therefore allowed to stand over.

Adjourned at eight minutes after Twelve o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 14th April, 1905.

COMMISSION.

The following Bills received the Royal Assent:—

1. Army (Annual).
2. Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1).
3. Leeds Corporation (Consolidation).

House adjourned during pleasure.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Littlehampton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]. The King's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Barrymore Estate Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^a.

Chelsea Electricity Supply Bill; Epping Gas Bill; Great Eastern Railway Bill; Higham and Hundred of Hoo Water Bill; Loughborough Corporation Bill; Norwich Union Life Insurance Society Bill; Weybridge and Walton-upon-Thames Electric Supply Bill. Read 2^a, and committed.

London and India Docks Company Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^a (according to order), and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Leeds and Liverpool Canal Bill [H.L.]; East Cowes Gas Bill [H.L.]; Orphan Working School and Alexandra Orphanage Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Walker and Wallsend Union Gas Bill. Read 3^a, and passed.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill. Brought from the Commons.

North Sussex Gas Bill; Hitchin and District Gas Bill; Woolwich Borough Council Bill; Dublin Corporation (Superannuation) Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; and referred to the Examiners.

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.]. A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Bolsover Gas, Denbigh Water, Formby Gas, Hayling Water, and Stavely Gas. Was presented by the Earl Waldegrave (for the Lord Privy Seal (*M. Salisbury*)); read 1^a; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 52.)

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 1) Bill [H.L.] (No. 53). A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Education under the Education Acts, 1870 to 1903, to enable the London County Council to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts. And

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 2) Bill [H.L.] (No. 54). A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Education under the Education Acts, 1870 to 1903, to enable the London County Council to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts. Were presented by the Lord President (*E. Vane* (*M. Londonderry*)); read 1^a; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill (No. 55); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill (No. 56); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill (No. 57). Read 1^a; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners

PETITIONS.

STREET BETTING BILL [H.L.]

Petition in favour of; of Inhabitants of the Urban District of Milnrow, in the county of Lancaster; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

AFRICA, No. 4 (1905).

Reports from the Director of Agriculture on the Government farms at Nairobi and Naivasha in the East Africa Protectorate, for the year 1904; and on the prospects of settlers.

INDIAN POLICE.

Report of the Indian Police Commission, and resolution of the Government of India.

SOUTH AFRICA.

Report of the South African Native Affairs Commission, 1903–1905.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3339. Colombia (Santa Marta).

No. 3340. Italy (Venice).

No. 3341. Japan (Hakodate).

Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table.

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899 (PAISLEY DISTRICT TRAMWAYS ORDER).

Report by the Board of Trade respecting the above Provisional Order, and the objects thereof. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899.

Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lord be proposed to the House as a member of the panel of Lords to act as Commissioners under the Act, viz., Lord Stanley of Alderley; agreed to; and the said Lord appointed accordingly.

House adjourned at half-past Four o'clock, to Monday the 8th of May next, a quarter-past Four o'clock

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 14th April, 1905.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Dublin Corporation (Superannuation) Bill; Hitchin and District Gas Bill; Woolwich Borough Council Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Great Western Railway (New Railways) Bill. As amended, considered; A clause added; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill. "To confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Trade, under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Woolwich," presented by Mr. Bonar Law; supported by Mr. Victor Cavendish; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 174.]

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill. "To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade, under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, The Electric Lighting (Scotland) Act, 1890, and The Electric Lighting (Scotland) Act, 1902, relating to Denny and Dunipace, Grangemouth, Inverness, Pollokshaws, Renfrew, Rutherglen, and Uphall," presented by Mr. Bonar Law; supported by Mr. Victor Cavendish; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 175.]

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill. "To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade, under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Andover, Burslem (Extension to Tunstall), Hessle, Litherland, Little Hulton, Penmaenmawr, Ravensthorpe, Stratford - upon - Avon, Surbiton, and Tewkesbury," presented by Mr. Bonar Law; supported by Mr. Victor Cavendish; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 176.]

Wigan Corporation Bill. Petition for additional Provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Walker and Wallsend Union Gas Bill, without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to extend the time for the construction of certain works authorised by The Leeds and Liverpool Canal Act, 1891; to confer further powers on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal Company; and for other purposes." [Leeds and Liverpool Canal Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for incorporating and conferring powers on the East Cowes Gas Company." [East Cowes Gas Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm the amalgamation of the Institutions known as the Orphan Working School, the Alexandra Orphanage for Infants, and the Convalescent Seaside Home for Orphans; to alter the name of the President, Vice-Presidents, Treasurer, and Governors of the Orphan Working School; to vest in them the property of the Alexandra Orphanage for Infants; to confer further powers on them; and for other purposes." [Orphan Working School and Alexandra Orphanage Bill [Lords.]

Leeds and Liverpool Canal Bill [Lords]; East Cowes Gas Bill [Lords]; Orphan Working School and Alexandra Orphanage Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

AGRICULTURAL RATES ACT, 1896, ETC., CONTINUANCE BILL.

Petition of the Scottish Chamber of Agriculture, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

AGRICULTURAL RATES, CONGESTED DISTRICTS, AND BURGH LAND TAX RELIEF (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1896.

Petitions for continuance; from the Border Union Agricultural Society; Kippen; and Lesmahagow; to lie upon the Table.

COMPENSATION FOR DAMAGE TO CROPS BILL.

Petition of the Scottish Chamber of Agriculture, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

DOGS BILL.

Petition of the Scottish Chamber of Agriculture; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Bridge of Weir; Dundee; Edinburgh; Galashiels; Locharbriggs; and Perth; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

Petition from Wandsworth, against; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petition from Oxenhall, against; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES BILL.

Petition from Wandsworth, against; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF BUTTER BILL.

Petition from Wandsworth, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF WHISKY BILL.

Petition from Wandsworth, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

VACCINATION BILL.

Petition from Wandsworth, against; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COLLEGE CHARTER ACT, 1871 (UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF SHEFFIELD).

Paper [presented 13th April] to be printed. [No. 127.]

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS (SUPERANNUATION) ACT, 1898.

Paper [presented 13th April] to be printed. [No. 128.]

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS (SUPERANNUATION) ACT, 1898 (SCOTLAND) 1899.

Paper [presented 13th April] to be printed. [No 129.]

SOUTH AFRICA (AUTHORITY OF HIGH COMMISSIONER).

Return [presented 13th April] to be printed. [No. 130.]

RAILWAYS ABANDONMENT.

Copy presented, of Report, under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, by the Board of Trade respecting the Paisley District Tramways Order and the objects thereof [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 131.]

SOUTH AFRICA.

Copy presented, of Report of the South African Native Affairs Commission, 1903–5 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

AFRICA (No. 4, 1905).

Copy presented, of Reports from the Director of Agriculture on the Government Farms at Nairobi and Naiwasha, in the East Africa Protectorate, for the year 1904, and on the Prospects of Settlers [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Political Disabilities of Scottish Peers.

MASTER OF ELIBANK (Edinburgh, Midlothian): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in the event of the Acts of Union being modified by an alteration in the number of representatives for Scotland and Ireland respectively, he will, under any Redistribution Bill, consider the propriety of dealing with the political disabilities of the Scottish Peers who are not Peers of Parliament.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) As I indicated to the hon. Member in a previous Answer†, I do not think that the political *status* of Scottish and Irish Peers can be appropriately dealt with in a Redistribution Bill.

Reduction of Naval Armaments—International Understanding.

MR. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been directed to the speech in the French Chamber by M. d'Estournelles de Constant, on 11th April, advocating a mutual understanding between the great Powers with a view to a general reduction of naval armaments, and quoting, in favour of this policy, declarations by the Member for West Birmingham and other public men in this country; and whether he will consider the advisability of approaching the French Government to ascertain whether some general agreement can be arrived at to further this end.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) The naval forces of this country are necessary for its national existence, and are kept solely for the purpose of defence. It is for countries of which these things cannot be said, or cannot be said to the same extent, to initiate suggestions on the subject of naval disarmament, if they think fit.

Vacancies for Second Class Clerks.

MR. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether any vacancies exist in the upper section of second-class clerks; and, if so, when they will be filled; what will be the age of the clerks then promoted; and to what scale of salary the promotions will entitle them.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) There are no existing vacancies in the upper section of the second-class clerks in the Customs Department, to which it is presumed my hon. friend's Question applies.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxliv., 1037.

Pupils Fees in Irish Model Schools.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury have the Commissioners of National Education lately made any representations relative to the appropriation by the Treasury of the fees paid by the pupils in Irish model schools; whether the conditions under which the Commissioners agreed to pay over to the Treasury a fixed annual sum of £2,000 out of the fees collected each year still obtain; and whether, considering the altered conditions of payments to teachers in model schools since the year 1900, the Treasury will no longer require this payment, and permit the Commissioners, as they have more than once requested, to distribute the fees collected among the teachers of the schools which the pupils paying these fees attend.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The Treasury has received no representation from the Irish Government or the Commissioners of National Education with reference to the arrangement under which the model school fees within the limit of £2,000 are appropriated in aid of the Vote for Public Education, Ireland.

Disturbances at Mr. Kensit's Meeting at Consett.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to an attack made on Mr. John Kensit, and others, at Consett, on the 27th ultimo; can he say if any arrests were made; and what steps he proposes to take to prevent such occurrences in the future.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) My attention was called to the matter by the Question of the hon. Member, and I have obtained a report from the chief constable of the county. He reports that some of Mr. Kensit's friends (not Mr. Kensit himself) attempted to hold a meeting in a public thoroughfare at Consett on the 27th ultimo, but that, owing to the hostile attitude of the crowd, the preachers left under the protection of the police. One of the party received a kick on his leg, and the police ascertained and told him the name of his assailant. The preacher said that he should have to report the matter to his headquarters, and consequently no arrest was made. The police who are responsible for the maintenance of order appear to have carried out their duties in a satisfactory manner, and no action on my part appears to be called for.

Unestablished and Rural Auxiliary Postmen in Ireland.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will state what benefits will accrue under his recently published Memorandum to unestablished and rural auxiliary postmen in Ireland, doing five hours duty and upwards, who perform the work of regular postmen in country districts, and who are paid at the rate of 4d. per hour, receiving wages less than 12s. per week; what change will be made in the condition and service of unestablished and rural auxiliaries who were appointed, prior to men now employed, on minor rural deliveries by the introduction of the house-to-house system some years ago; and whether he will take into consideration the increased responsibilities of this class, as well as established postmen, whose conditions of employment hitherto have shut them out from the benefits and privileges extended to all established postmen during the past ten years.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) Unestablished and rural auxiliary postmen doing five hours duty and upwards, but not a full duty, are as a rule paid somewhat more than 4d. an hour. Their pay depends upon the scale assigned to the established postmen at the place from which they start, and where an improvement has been made in that scale these auxiliary postmen will benefit. I am not sure of the exact meaning of the latter part of the hon. Member's Question. Perhaps he will furnish me with concrete instances.

Beira (South Africa) Post Office—Delay in returning Undelivered Postal Packets.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire): To ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the fact that loss has arisen to the proprietors of the *Banffshire Advertiser* newspaper through the action of the post office at Beira, South Africa, in retaining undelivered for more than six months a number of copies of that newspaper in place of, as requested on the cover, returning each individual copy so soon as it was ascertained that delivery could not be made; and whether steps will be taken to prevent the recurrence of the action complained of.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) As I informed the hon. Member, when replying to a letter which he wrote to me on this subject recently, the post office at Beira would not be bound to return any of the newspapers in question to this country for six months. Some of them were, however, retained there for a longer period, and the delay has already been reported to the Portuguese authorities in order that it may be inquired into.

Pay of Post Office Provincial Night Messengers.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): To ask the Postmaster-General if he is aware that the provincial night messengers have received no increase of pay under his new scheme as they were already paid the minimum wage of town postmen; and will he consider the case of the night messengers with five years of approved service, with a view to their being paid a similar increment as all postmen receive on attaining the age of twenty-five, or granted a proportionate increase of pay on the scale of the rural postmen.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The hon. Member appears to be under a misapprehension. The minimum of the provincial town postmen has been raised in four of the five classes, and where the unestablished night telegraph messengers were formerly paid at the minimum of the town postmen's scale it follows that in such cases they have received a corresponding increase. I fully considered the further points to which the hon. Member refers, and I see no reason for giving these men any further increase of pay. Their work is of an extremely simple character, and widely different from that performed by postmen.

Learners performing Post Office Duties.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Postmaster-General if he will state the number of learners in Ireland, Scotland, and England, respectively, who were admitted into the Post Office service by competitive examination like other Civil servants, and who are now qualified in both sorting and telegraphy, but who, notwithstanding that they work eight hours per day, have never received pay in any way; how many learners in the three countries, respectively, who are fully qualified in general post office work are still kept as learners at the rate of 5s. or 6s. per week; and will he see in future that young people will not be admitted into the public service in excess of the ordinary requirements, and thereby prevent their being kept for years practically without pay in the employment of the State.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I am not aware that there are any learners, whether admitted by competition or otherwise, who are fully qualified and are working eight hours a day without pay, and I shall be glad if the hon. Member will let me know the names of any offices where such a state of things exists. Most qualified learners are now obtaining employment as substitutes with wages considerably above 5s. or 6s. a week, and I do not think the expense of ascertaining what small number have not yet obtained such employment would be justified. All learners who have served as such for two years will in future receive a considerable increase of pay. I have already taken steps to restrict the admission of learners.

Date of Discussion on Post Office Estimates.

MR. NANNETTI: To ask the Postmaster-General if he can now state when the discussion on the Post Office Estimates will be taken; and whether they will be taken before the Easter Recess.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) It is quite impossible for the Post Office Estimates to be taken before the Easter Recess, but I am endeavouring to arrange that they shall be taken at an early date after Easter. As the hon. Member will understand, the matter is one which does not rest entirely with me.

Armoured Cruisers.

Mr. YERBURGH (Chester): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what alterations, if any, have been made to His Majesty's ships "Powerful" and "Terrible" which entitles them to be described as armoured in the March Navy List, seeing that the term applies equally and in the same manner to armoured cruisers of the "Black Prince" and "Kent" classes; and what is the reason why cruisers of the "Andromeda," "Ariadne," and "Niobe" classes are also described as armoured.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The ships in question are described as protected in the March Navy List. The table alluded to was first introduced into the Navy List in January of this year. The error in classification mentioned occurred in the Navy List of that month, but was corrected in the February issue.

The Unemployed Bill—Application to Scotland.

Mr. FINDLAY (Lanarkshire, N.E.): To ask the Lord-Advocate, seeing that the Government intend introducing before Easter a Bill relative to the unemployed, whether such measure will be applicable to Scotland.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) It is not proposed to include Scotland in the Bill.

Fish Carriage from the North of Scotland.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Lord-Advocate, having regard to the fact that in March of last year the late Secretary for Scotland was in communication with the President of the Board of Agriculture with a view to secure a reduction in the through rates charged for the carriage of fish from the North of Scotland to the southern markets, will he state the result of the correspondence, and the names of the railway companies which have been communicated with on the subject.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) I cannot add anything to the Answer given to the hon. Member on February 27th[†].

Port of Ness Harbour—Work of Messrs. D. and T. Stevenson.

Mr. WEIR: To ask the Lord-Advocate, having regard to the fact that the harbour and breakwater at Port Ness, Island of Lewis, were constructed from plans prepared by Messrs. D. and T. Stevenson, and that the harbour, although comparatively new, is now in such a condition as not to warrant the expenditure requisite to render it of service to the fishermen, will the Scottish Office consider the expediency of employing some other firm of civil engineers when again requiring professional assistance.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) The only assurance I can give is that the Secretary for Scotland will endeavour to secure the most efficient professional assistance when occasion arises.

Income-tax on Arrears of Rent pai under the Irish Land Act.

Sir JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can state when, in the case of an agreement having been executed between landlord and tenant for the sale of a holding under the Irish Land Act, 1903, and a sum of money added to the selling price of the holding in respect of arrears of rent, the income-tax authorities are entitled to demand payment of income-tax at current or other rate on such arrears before the vendor receives same through the Estates Commissioners on the allocation of the purchase money.

[†] See (4) *Debates*, cxli., 1321.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) Since the year 1881 it has been the practice in Ireland under Treasury sanction, continued from year to year, to accept income-tax from the landlords of agricultural lands on the actual rents received from time to time instead of on the full amount assessed under Schedule A. The Board of Inland Revenue will adopt the same practice in regard to arrears of rent paid under the Irish Land Act, 1903. They have, in fact, arranged with the Irish Land Commissioners to furnish the Comptroller in Dublin with statements of such arrears as and when paid, so that application for the duty may be made at or soon after the time of payment.

Balance-Sheet of Post Office Savings Bank.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Comptroller of the National Debt has prepared a balance-sheet of the Post Office Savings Bank on the 31st December, 1904, in order that the National Debt Commissioners may be kept acquainted with the financial position of the bank; if so, on what basis was the valuation of securities made; and is there any objection to laying the balance-sheet upon the Table of the House.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The calculations which are necessary to determine the amount of the liability to depositors on the 31st December last have not yet been completed. When the liabilities have been ascertained, a statement will be prepared for presentation to Parliament, showing on the one side the liabilities, and on the other side the nature and amount of the securities held, as directed by Section 9 of The Savings Banks Act, 1904.

Post Office and Trustees Savings Banks.

DR. MACNAMARA: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that the sum due to depositors in the Post Office Savings Bank and the Trustees Savings Banks amount together to £200,000,000, repayable on demand, against which no reserve is kept; and has he considered the desirability of forming a gold reserve against these deposits.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The cash balance held on account of the Savings Banks is sufficient to meet the actual demands. The statutes require that the funds of the Savings Banks shall be invested in securities in order to earn the interest payable to depositors, and I see no reason why that requirement should not continue to be complied with.

Supposed Complaint against Constable Pakenham.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a report has been made against Constable Pakenham, stationed at Mountpottinger Barracks, Belfast; will he state what is its nature; and on what grounds has Constable Pakenham been refused a sworn inquiry into the complaint made against him.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) The hon. Member has been misinformed. No report or complaint of any kind has been made against this constable, nor has he made any demand for an inquiry.

Gold Output of Transvaal Mines—White and Coloured Labour Employed.

DR. MACNAMARA: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can give, month for month for 1904, and for the months of January, February, and March, 1905, the gold output of the mines of the Transvaal the number of native labourers, the number of Chinese coolies, and the number of white men engaged in mining operations.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) The figures asked for are shown in the following table so far as they are available—

Transvaal Gold Mining Industry.

Period.	Whites employed.	Coloured employed.	Chinese employed.	Output.	
				Witwatersrand.	Other districts.
				£	£
January, 1904 -	12,814	75,027	Nil	1,183,946	47,472
February ,, -	12,801	77,899	—	1,199,712	30,014
March ,, -	12,681	79,569	—	1,266,281	44,286
April ,, -	12,740	78,825	—	1,261,746	43,685
May ,, -	13,127	77,519	—	1,292,978	45,361
June ,, -	13,413	74,632	1,004	1,267,093	42,673
July ,, -	13,707	73,370	1,388	1,254,097	45,784
August ,, -	14,333	73,148	4,945	1,279,047	47,421
September ,,	14,433	75,411	9,020	1,279,123	47,383
October ,, -	14,525	78,491	12,965	1,333,481	49,686
November ,, -	14,944	81,673	17,469	1,376,311	51,636
December ,, -	15,023	83,639	20,885	1,486,234	52,566
January, 1905 -	15,536	89,895	27,222	1,517,349	51,159
February ,, -	15,831	97,882	31,424	1,491,174	54,197
March ,, -	Official	figures	not yet	received.	

New Field Guns for 4th West Yorks Volunteer Artillery.

Mr. J. F. HOPE (Sheffield, Brightside): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can now say when the 4th West Yorks Volunteer Artillery will be supplied with the 15-pounder field guns now in use by the Regular Army.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) It is not possible at present to say when it is probable that field guns will be available for issue to this Volunteer Corps.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. Halsey reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from serving on the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure:—Mr. Waldron; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Joseph Nolan.

Report to lie upon the Table.

LUNACY ACT AMENDMENT (LONDON) BILL.

Order for Second Reading upon Wednesday, 3rd May, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

*MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland) said it was not his own good fortune but it was the misfortune of the hon. Baronet the Member for the Northwich Division of Cheshire which placed on him the duty of again moving, as he did last year, the Second Reading of this Bill. He was sure they all regretted—and no one more than himself—that the task should not have been undertaken by the hon. Baronet who was unfortunately absent owing to ill-health, and whose prominence in the business world would pre-eminently entitle him to deal with the matter. But he felt that this question did not depend in any sense upon the personality of its advocates, for it was part of a great world movement in finance and it mattered very little what individual proposed or advocated it. It was, moreover, a topic of increasing interest in our own country and one which was every year supported more powerfully by the municipalities great and small. This was the fourth year they had brought this Bill before the House of Commons. They admitted that its subject was in some respects complicated and presented many practical difficulties which it would be necessary to solve if the measure became law, but they were certain that the basis of their proposals was sound, and he hoped the House would send the Bill to a Committee in order that it might be thrashed out in detail.

In every important respect it was the same Bill as that which he introduced last year. Its main object was to make an assessment of the land values of our towns and urban districts, to place upon the rate-book a second column, which would consist of assessments at 3 per cent. of the selling values, and to provide that where the new assessment in the case of any piece of property amounted to a larger sum than the present assessment on the annual value the rate should fall upon that new assessment. There was a small addition to Clause 3 to carry out what was the original intention of the clause, and an addition to Clause 6, as to which he would have to say a word or two later on. He might say to his hon. friends from Ireland that the promoters of the Bill had considered a proposition to include Ireland as well as England and Wales within its scope, but after consulting an hon. and learned Member sitting in that House, they had taken his advice that it would technically be too difficult to deal in the same Bill with Ireland, as it would require a variety of wording. They therefore hoped that their Irish and Scotch friends would continue to support the Bill on the understanding that the promoters wished to extend it, and would be ready to do so, to other parts of the United Kingdom as soon as there was an opportunity of bringing in a Bill on similar lines. This Bill was supported with practical unanimity by the local authorities of the United Kingdom. There were no fewer than 166 corporations or borough or town councils, 152 urban district councils, and 128 Poor Law authorities supporting it, and since the Bill was introduced last year the number of local authorities supporting the measure had been increased by no fewer than 205.

MR. BOND (Nottingham, E.): How do they support it?

*MR. TREVELYAN said they had all passed resolutions in its favour, and in view of this fact it was useless for opponents to describe the Bill as revolutionary or subversive. He did not intend to argue that land reformers were inclined to regard the measure as the whole solution of the question. They considered it rather as the basis from which it was hoped the reform of the present system of local taxation would start.

He would like to say a word or two about the general principle that was involved in the Bill. Everyone at the present moment was beginning to say that the difficulties of our local finance were as great as those of national finance. In his opinion they were even greater, because the whole of our local taxation was drawn from one and the same source, with the exception of some comparatively small national subventions. No one could say that our great wealthy towns could not afford the taxation which was at present levied—if it were levied in the right direction. The evil of the present system was that the rates to a very great extent fell upon houses and improvements. The assessments on which rates at present were levied contained, it was true, the annual letting value of the land. But in most cases more than half of the assessments from which rates were at present levied fell upon the value of improvements. This was specially true of those parts of towns where development was going on most actively. If they went into the outside parts of their towns they would find, taking the present assessments on which rates were levied, that the enormously greater part of the assessments—in many cases nine-tenths—were assessments not on land value, but on the value of houses and mills and of improvements on the land. In a great part of our towns there was a taxation from six to nine shillings in the pound, nine-tenths of which was upon improvements and houses which were put upon the land, and to many of them that appeared to be the real evil of the present burden of the rates. It was a flagrant and disastrous social evil and it seemed to bring them face to face with the actual reason for the overcrowding in their cities and towns. Why was it, when the poor were crying out for good houses and when they were paying exorbitant rents for bad tenements, that the building trade, where there was a great demand for houses as evidenced by the readiness to pay high rents, was seriously depressed? After all, the building trade had every advantage it could have. It had no foreign competition to face, it could obtain material very cheap, and there was no lack of demand for houses; but there was a lack of a supply because the supply was so seriously taxed.

He would like to quote from an interesting and important statement, made by one who knew more, perhaps, about our town populations than any other man in the United Kingdom. He referred to Mr. Charles Booth, who had written recently on this subject, and who took an even more advanced view on it than some hon. Members who were promoting this Bill. He said—

> "When for the advantage of the consumer, and in the interests of the towns, and of trade, the food of the people was relieved of a large part of the taxation it had borne, it seems to have been overlooked, or not fully foreseen, that the houses the people lived in were, or would come to be, even more heavily taxed than their food had ever been, and that free internal developments would be hindered by the peculiar incidence of this burden."

What they thought was that if a measure of that kind were passed, and if the people in their towns were able to see side by side, the assessment of the permanent land value—and the value of the whole property, including buildings and improvements, they would realise how very much better it would be to gradually remove the present taxation on improvements and houses which varied in proportion to the expenditure and enterprise of the person who made the improvements. They would see the advantage of substituting a tax on land value, the incidence of which would be much the same on all properties in the same quarter of the town, because the land values would be very much the same and would not rise in proportion to the amount of capital which was put into the land to improve it. This was the ultimate aspect of land taxation, but they did not want to hurry. It was too great a question, and this Bill did not go so far as that. There was another reason why houses were not erected as rapidly as the population required, and that was that land in the neighbourhood of towns was dear. It was to that question that this Bill was immediately directed. All they desired was to get land into the market for the purpose of developing the town. Land was a first necessity for any kind of living or industry. It was private property in all civilised nations, but still it did not cease to be a first necessity for everybody, and because it was a first necessity for every enterprise, the State was bound to see that it was used for the best purposes, while it preserved to private individuals the right to draw rent from it.

At the present time good agricultural land on which there was no immediate prospect of building could be sold for from £50 to £100 per acre, which represented from 3d. to 6d. per square yard. But the time came when that land was gradually converted into building land, and it was so converted because the towns had crept up to it, and not because the landlord, by any superhuman skill or industry, had brought the land nearer to the town. Every penny of the increased value was due to the exertions of others than the landlord, who was very lucky indeed to get that increase of value. Who could deny that a man who possessed agricultural land which he could sell for £50 or £100 per acre was exceedingly fortunate, when, owing to the development of a town, he was able to get from £200 to £300 for the very same property. Yet, as society was ordered to-day, the price of land before coming into the market for building land was enormously greater than the figures he had just given. He had asked men who had had to do with dealings in land what was the lowest price at which land came into the market round our great towns, and they had informed him that from £600 to £800 per acre, or 2s. per square yard, was about the lowest, but that the ordinary price at which it did come into the market was very much higher, and that it ranged from £1,000 to £1,500 per acre. He was putting out of consideration those tracts of land which were purposely kept out of use until the towns had developed round them—tracts for which the prices were enormously in advance of the figures he had quoted. Nobody who was arguing for the Bill would assert that individual blame attached to the landlord for charging these prices. It was a State-sanctioned monopoly which enabled them to bleed the people because of their very necessities. They did not, in the long run, expect humanitarianism from anyone. But it was not good for the people. It was their business to get land into the market at reasonably cheap rates, and they might be perfectly certain that landlords would get an increase on agricultural value, even if they taxed it as the Bill proposed to do. The difference between the selling value of agricultural land to-day and the selling value of building land showed an enormously too great discrepancy, and, therefore, he submitted they ought to bring land into the market at a much cheaper rate.

During the last few months he had been watching the criticisms upon their proposals, and he was sure that no one on that side of the House had any disposition to despise or neglect those criticisms. One thing said was that land was not kept out of the market, but he would like in that connection to quote from a letter which appeared in the *Property Market Review*, from the pen of Mr. Donald Dinwiddy. The portion he wished to quote was as follows—

> "An estate in the outskirts of London, situate in an urban district, was purchased a few years ago, and its 'selling value' may be taken to be £15,000. The 'land value,' as defined by the Bill, would, at 3 per cent., be £450 per annum, and rates, at 6s. 8d. in the £, would amount to £150. The real annual value—evidenced by a grazing tenancy—is £60, on which the tenant pays rates, which after exemption of a moiety of the poor rates and three-fourths of the district rate, amount to £8 per annum. Under this Bill the *unfortunate* landowner would be mulcted in an additional £142 per annum for rates, whereas the present annual value and income is but £60."

He noted in passing that the writer of the letter spoke of the landlord who had a property worth £15,000 as unfortunate.

MR. BOND: The landlord bought and paid for it.

*MR. TREVELYAN said that if £15,000 were not a mere speculative price the landlord ought to be taxed on that sum in order that he might be compelled to put the land to its proper use. It was no very great hardship to compel him to realise if the land possessed that real value, and he was acting in a grossly unsocial way in keeping it out of the market. The only possible argument in his favour was that he might have paid a speculative price for the land which could not be immediately realised. It had been suggested by the hon. Member for Leicester and others that if this tax were put upon developing land it would check land speculation. He agreed that it might do so, but he wanted to ask the House was that really a harmful thing. It was perfectly true that under the Bill it would be of no use paying speculative prices for land which could not be realised, because any man who did that would be taxed on the price he had given, and it would be a luxury, which he would not be able to afford, to hold the land until its speculative value could be realised. Everybody who dealt in land now had come to be a speculator, and he would ask the House whether in the case of what he might call legitimate speculators, that was to say, the case of people who were ready to build at once, there would be any real injury to them. He admitted that the man who bought simply in order to sell at a higher price later on would be hit. If the House thought fit they could mitigate the fall by not bringing the Bill into full operation at once. There was no real benefit to the community in having pieces of land bought merely to be held for a possible rise. Genuine builders and building societies had now in a sense frequently to pay speculative prices, because they could not be certain of getting land when they wanted it at reasonable prices, and consequently they had to look ahead and make speculative bargains in land for use years hence. But they would not be seriously hit by this Bill. In some cases where they had bought land not yet ripe for building they might be hit; but on the other hand they would be immensely advantaged by the fact that they would be able to alter their whole policy of purchase, simply buying land shortly before they desired to build, with the certainty that the monopoly which now frequently prevented their buying would be broken, and that land would come into the market steadily at reasonable prices.

One of the most popular objections to the scheme was that it would cause open spaces to be sold. If its supporters believed the result of the Bill would be to provide less air for crowded populations and decrease the number of parks and open spaces they would regard that as a very serious objection. But they urged just the opposite. As long as the prosperity of the country continued our cities would continue to spread, and under this Bill they believed the cities would spread more rapidly, and that the crowded populations would be less crammed than now in the centres of our great towns. At any rate, indoors the people would have more air to breathe. The number of parks and open spaces in great cities was largely dependent on the intelligence of the municipalities, but at present, however active they might be in that respect, they were hampered at every turn by exorbitant and impossible prices constantly asked by private owners. The contention of the supporters of the Bill was that municipalities would be able to do far more in this direction if they could insist upon land coming into the market at reasonable prices. But there were cases in which the municipality might be unwilling to buy, while private owners were willing to keep open spaces for the public. To meet such cases there had been inserted in the Bill Clause 6, enabling such parks and open spaces to be exempted if dedicated under trust to the public use.

A large number of valuers and professional men connected with land held the view that this assessment of land could not be made, or that it would be too expensive for municipalities to undertake. A profession was always conservative and apt to take the view of the persons who chiefly employed it. This profession was always working for landlords and was bound to take their view, not from prejudice, but because its work was always done from the landlord's point of view, and notoriously landlords did not like this Bill. On the other hand, those members of the profession who were in the same relation to municipalities as others were to private landlords were of opinion that the thing could be done. But a more material fact than the speculative opinion of the profession was the actual experience of those countries where the principle had been adopted. There had been absolutely no difficulty found in assessing land in many Colonies, Germany, and the United States; it had been done perfectly easily and, he believed, inexpensively. In Australia and New Zealand, where the system was in full operation, the clerks of the various municipalities which had adopted it all said the same thing—that it had not increased and in some cases had decreased, the cost of assessment. Since the war the principle had been adopted in Johannesburg. The municipality desired that the whole of the rating should be based upon land values, and not at all upon houses, but the Government of the Transvaal preferred that houses should still be taxed. The whole of the developing land was now taxed on its capital value. A year ago the boundaries of Johannesburg were extended from an area of nine square miles to seventy-five and a half square miles, mainly for the purpose of bringing within the area of this taxation large properties of undeveloped land of great value which were being held out of the market by companies and that object had been largely secured. An even more important case was that of the city of New York. In 1903 there was granted to New York a new charter, the object being to enable a more effective assessment to be made of the value of real property. It was not undertaken for the special purpose of taxing land values. In one year a new assessment was made of the land values of New York from one end of the city to the other, and he had with him the special record in which every price of property was assessed in two columns—one of the value of real estate unimproved and the other the value of real estate with improvements thereupon. It was a striking fact that the municipality did this not for the purpose of exempting improvements, but in order to make a more exact assessment of the whole of real property, and they would not have done it had it meant enormous expense.

In the face of these facts why should we be so timid about entering upon this policy? It might not be a complete scheme, but it did, at any rate, open the door to something like a final settlement, and it had the merit of being capable of indefinite development as the people of the country approved of it. It was impossible at a blow to alter the practice of centuries, or by a single stroke of the legislative pen to set up a new system of taxation, but the Bill struck at the root-evil of the present system, and would immediately result in an enormous reduction of the cost of the first necessity of life and industry, viz., land. Every year there was a stronger feeling that this proposal deserved serious consideration and support; there were even members of the Government not hostile to it, and he hoped the House would, if possible, by a larger majority than last year, pass the Second Reading, and permit the Bill to be sent to a Committee upstairs for detailed discussion. He begged to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*Mr. AUSTIN TAYLOR (Liverpool, East Toxteth) said the mover of the Bill had not only admirably restated the case for the measure, but had dealt with objections developed in last year's debate and since. Seeing that the principle of the Bill had already received the approval of the House, what its supporters had to do to-day was not so much to restate their case as to listen to what fresh arguments might have been found to its practical application. He could not see how anyone who had been officially connected with the demolition of insanitary property could withhold his support from the essential principle of this Bill, which he took to be the separate assessment and ascertainment of land values with a view, if not to special rating, at any rate to the direct recovery from the owner of that portion of the rate which pertained to the land.

He had been concerned officially with the demolition of a block of insanitary property in Liverpool. He took the Government inspector to the property on a snowy day, and even his well-tried nerves received a shock. But the most striking feature was the position of the landowner. The property had been developed on a comparatively short lease. The houses had never been fit for human habitation, in fact, they ought never to have been erected, and the property was in a state of decay. The unfortunate occupiers and the still more unfortunate tenants had a certain interest in the transaction, and the authorities had a direct interest in getting rid of them both. But the owner of the land had contracted himself out of all that interest in the property which imposed duties and responsibilities. He received his ground rents and in that sense sat at the receipt of custom, but he had no obligations, and within a comparatively short period would again enter into possession of the site. That did not seem to him quite a fair state of things between the owner of that land and the municipality. What was the position? The landowner had no possible motive in terminating the state of that property. He received what he was entitled to receive, namely, the ground rents, but the onus lay on the municipality of getting rid of the scandal. Of course, the first thing which they had to do was to buy the landlord out. He did not want to say that the landlord was exorbitant or unfair. His opinion was that he behaved as landlords generally behaved when they had certain property for sale, and they thought they could get the full amount awarded for it. It occurred to him that this was not a satisfactory state of things as between a municipality and the owners of the soil, and the position would have been improved so far as the municipality was concerned had some method such as that which was the essential principle of this Bill been adopted for putting the site under special assessment and for the direct levying upon the owner of the land of that portion of the rent which appertained to the value of the soil. Under such an arrangement the owner of the soil would have had an interest alike with the municipality, and he would also have been interested in getting rid of a state of things which ought never to have existed. It might be said that the landowner would contract himself out of that arrangement as he had done out of the previous one. That might be so between the people who wished to assert their rights and the individual owner who naturally would take advantage of the full limits of his ingenuity. But that was not a reason why they should refuse to take a modest preliminary by putting in a separate column the value of the land in urban communities and then they would have a direct interest in its proper treatment.

He did not want to follow his hon. friend in his treatment generally of this question. It was an extremely complicated subject, but he thought all hon. Members present would bear testimony to the ability with which the hon. Member who moved this Bill had threaded the maze of an extremely difficult problem. He felt that such an adjustment as was proposed by this Bill was very desirable. Land was a much truer barometer of value than the buildings upon it, and that was an essential truth which lay behind the principle of this Bill. Land might be put to its full use or to its stultified use, or it might be withheld from the requirements of the community altogether; but its value could easily be ascertained if the will to ascertain it was there. Its value was a truer barometer of the needs and of the prosperity of the community than anything else, and he felt quite sure that before they finished with this question they would come to the conclusion that it was the truest basis of assessment and value. This Bill was an attempt to adjust matters between the different groups of occupiers and owners. He took it that was all it contemplated, namely, the bringing into rating of land which today was either wilfully or by neglect not properly developed, and therefore not bearing its true proportion of the common burdens of the community.

He felt that the details of this Bill were open in some respects to objection, but that was to say no more than in the application of any principles there would always be some objection. It was quite impossible in any field of human activity for human thought to grasp or advocate a principle of any kind without being immediately confronted with enormous practical difficulties in carrying it into effect. They did not decide for or against the principle altogether because it was difficult of application, but they decided for it on grounds other than that, and in this particular case, certainly, he felt that upon the question of land values and its assessment for rating they could embrace the principle and leave the practical application to be settled after the principle had been affirmed.

There was only one other point, in conclusion, that he wished to touch upon, and it was one which he knew had excited some comment in Liverpool. He alluded to the non-disturbance of existing contracts. It was, of course, well known that in the earlier stages of this Bill it was proposed to interfere with existing contracts.

Mr. TREVELYAN: That has never been proposed.

***Mr. AUSTIN TAYLOR** said at any rate it was quite clear that it was proposed in this Bill to leave existing leases and agreements undisturbed. It was, of course, felt by many occupiers who had developed properties upon short leases that it would be extremely hard upon them if at any time they were called upon to pay a special rate for a site value which they were perfectly incapable of recovering from the owner until the lease had expired. In the interval, having already agreed to bear the whole burden of the rates from which the owner was exempted himself, and having had to bear the enhancement of rates not anticipated, it was natural they should feel it hard that a Bill directed to recovering from the landowner should land them or run the risk of landing them into a special rate upon land values. He only mentioned that point because he thought the promoters of this Bill in the House of Commons would be only too willing to safeguard them against any injustice of that character, and he felt strongly that if at any time in the development of land this injustice arose it would be perfectly possible to readjust matters by giving them the relief which would inevitably arise upon the buildings and other properties which would to that extent be relieved. He only mentioned that point, and it did not in the slightest degree qualify his support of the principle of this Bill. He trusted that the House of Commons would once more affirm this principle, and he believed that by so doing they would be affirming a principle which was of vital consequence to our large towns, a consequence which those towns had shown themselves fully cognisant of in the resolutions and decisions which they had adopted by large majorities.

Mr. REMNANT (Finsbury, Holborn) said he congratulated the mover of the Bill upon his great luck in winning the place in the ballot which had enabled him to bring forward this most interesting subject. He congratulated him upon his good fortune, and although the hon. Baronet who drew first place was not able to be present, still there was great compensation for this in the knowledge that the Bill had been moved by the same hon. Member who moved it last year. He did not think, however, that they could congratulate the hon. Member upon bringing in precisely the same Bill as last year, because, with the exception of one or two trivial alterations, he had made no allowance for the criticisms passed upon the measure upon the last occasion, and which in his opinion were worthy of every consideration. In spite of this the hon. Member had brought in a Bill without any alterations whatever in the direction of meeting the objections raised when this matter was last discussed. The hon. Member had made an extraordinary mixture of personal and real property. If in the case of shares a large increase of value took place he supposed the hon. Member would have no objection to that, although he did object in the case of other property. He supposed the hon. Member had gone through the *Hansard* record of last year's debate, and had taken out the points which he thought worthy of consideration. He might say that he had done the same thing, and although he stuck to all he said last year, he was sure the House would not wish to hear a repetition of what took place upon that occasion. Therefore, he would endeavour to confine himself to any new objections which he had to the Bill as it was introduced to-day.

The hon. Member who moved this measure had rather twitted them upon the fact that while they opposed this Bill they had nevertheless supported the Agricultural Ratings Bill. He did not think that charge of inconsistency could be properly supported on this occasion, because the legislation that took place in reference to the rating of agricultural land and tithe rent-charge was based upon a special interim Report made by a Commission which dealt with that subject. He would like to refer to the second Report dealing with agricultural depression in which special mention was made of the grave condition to which agricultural interests had come, and speaking of relief urged that measures should be taken without delay, and that although legislation could not be carried into effect in connection with the financial arrangements of that year, declared that something ought to be done, and at once, in each of the directions suggested, to mitigate, if possible, the deplorable results and to arrest the progress of the depression. But the Bill as submitted to the House flew directly in the face of the Report of the Commissioners upon Local Taxation. Even the Minority Report on ground values advocated an owner's site value rate only as a "make-weight" to accompany "increased provision made by the State in aid of services locally administered." And, again, the Minority Report justified a new charge, on the ground that it would be "counterbalanced by the relief proposed to be granted in the shape of increased subventions." The Amendment, on the other hand, was strictly in accordance with the recommendations of the Royal Commission. The Commissioners pointed out that, while personal property subject to Imperial taxation was about three times as great as real property so taxable, the non-rateable property contributed to local objects—if elementary education was excluded—only a little over 6 per cent. of the whole expenditure, and nearly 83 per cent. fell on the rates. In order to relieve this inequality the Report proposed that there should be an increased payment from death duties on personalty for local purposes; that the transfer of trading licences and of establishment licences should be made complete, and that power should be given to increase their amount; while the assignment to local purposes of a fixed portion of the income-tax was said to be deserving of consideration. The terms of the Amendment were borrowed from Lord Spencer's recent letter on the policy of the next Liberal Government. Lord Spencer in that letter said—

> "I wish now to deal with the whole question of taxation and local rates. In my opinion the legislation of the Government on this subject was entirely wrong. It favoured one class at the cost of the whole country and neglected many parts of the problem, and I am confident that the proper mode of treating this subject will be to introduce as far as possible a broad and comprehensive measure to deal with the whole basis and incidence of taxation and rating which both in town and country now are antiquated and need drastic reform. The one object to be arrived at is not piecemeal and partial treatment, but such legislation as will secure fair and equitable results to all classes of the community in the financial burdens which as citizens they must bear."

[Cries of "Hear, hear!"] He was glad to hear those "Hear, hears" on the other side of the House. He hoped that an Amendment which carried with it the approval of both sides of the House would when put to the vote be carried unanimously. It seemed to him that it was significant that in that letter Lord Spencer laid down a principle which was often enunciated by the late Lord Salisbury. Speaking at Nottingham on November 26th, 1889, Lord Salisbury said—

> "The danger of all interference with rates, as anybody who is acquainted with parochial life must know, is that there is nothing so likely to set society by the ears, and an attempt to revolutionise the principle on which we have conducted the levying of our rates ever since the days of Elizabeth will be an exceedingly dangerous and difficult task. But, if it is ever attempted, we must deal with a great injustice which is inherent in the rates, and settle that. I refer to the distinction that is made between real and personal property. It is not in itself just that if I possess £100 a year in the Funds, I should go entirely without any taxation whatever for the support of the poor, or the education of the poor, whereas if, instead of putting that £100 into the funds, I put it into land or houses, I shall pay a tenth part, or a fourth part, of my income for the support of the poor and for the support of education. The thing is utterly unjust. Nothing but mere use would have induced us to submit to it so long, and if any great revolutionary statesman is coming who is to take the whole thing to pieces and set it up on the most approved philosophical principles, the first thing he must do is to see that personal property should pay its share of the rates as well as realty."

That was the opinion of the late Lord Salisbury in 1889, and it appeared to be the opinion to-day of Lord Spencer and a great number of hon. Members now in the House. The excessive strain upon real property under the present system had lately been described by Sir Robert Giffen. He would read Sir Robert Giffen's words—

> "Speaking in round figures, we may say that about £240,000,000 of income from real property have to bear a charge of close upon £60,000,000 of rates . . . In addition the property has to bear a further charge at present of over £7,000,000 for income-tax, at the rate of

1s. per £. There are, besides, the death duties. There is no doubt that this combination of charges is so high as to deprive the country of the financial reserve it ought always to possess in its real property specially, as well as in the incomes generally liable to income-tax. The nation is now so tightly bound that the taxable resource furnished by real property has no elasticity."

While the Amendment was thus supported by the highest official, political, and financial authorities, no such authorities could be cited on behalf of the piecemeal and partial legislation proposed by the Bill. The Bill was no doubt supported by a large number of municipal authorities. Hon. Members had recently received a circular showing that a large number of corporations supported the Bill. The hon. Member who moved the Second Reading said that in all cases resolutions had been passed in favour of the Bill. He himself had not gone through the whole list, but it struck him that the action of one corporation, namely, that of Stockport, did not altogether bear out the statement of the hon. Member. The following appeared in the *Manchester Guardian*, January 5th, 1905—

"Yesterday Stockport Town Council discussed the rating of land values. Mr. Alderman J. Turner proposed 'That this Council expresses its approval of legislation for the purposes of rating and taxing land values, and hereby requests the borough representatives in Parliament to ballot for a Bill with those objects.' He urged that the trend of recent legislation had been to cast burdens upon the industrial community which were fast becoming intolerable. The taxation of land values would be such a fiscal reform as this country had not seen since the repeal of the Corn Laws; indeed, it was a necessary corollary of free trade.

"Mr. A. Glithero seconded the motion, and referred to a farm in Stockport which some years ago was let at a rental of £60 per annum, and from which now, the land being covered with buildings, there was received in chief rents £663 a year."

"Mr. A. Briggs opposed the motion, contending that it was a question bristling with difficulties, and that it should be left to the Imperial Parliament without pressure.

"The motion was defeated by 25 votes to 15.'

MR. TREVELYAN: I was told yesterday that the list was up to date in December. There may have been one or two alterations since.

MR. REMNANT: Nobody doubts for a moment what the hon. Gentleman says, but the report I have read shows, at all events, that the list is not absolutely reliable.

Mr. Austin Taylor.

MR. TREVELYAN: It is reliable up to December. Of course it is obvious that one or two municipalities may have changed their opinion one way or the other.

MR. REMNANT: It is only a small matter. There was no resolution passed up to December in Stockport. [AN HON. MEMBER: Yes, previously.] According to the extract I have read from the *Manchester Guardian* Stockport at the present moment is not in favour of the principle of the Bill.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax): No, no! Mr. Briggs only moved the previous question.

MR. REMNANT said the town council decided by a majority that it was not a question which they could properly discuss. There were, no doubt, a large number of municipal authorities in favour of the Bill, but there were also a good many who were solid against it. It was only natural that such bodies should welcome a scheme which promised to supply them with fresh funds at the expense of a minority of the population, thought it was more than doubtful whether it was to the interest of the ratepayers that their representatives should be encouraged to engage still further in hazardous commercial enterprises without in the first instance appearing to raise the rates. In point of fact, however, municipal authorities were by no means solid for the Bill. Neither the City Corporation nor the Westminster City Council supported it, and various provincial authorities, including the Somerset County Council and the Town Council of Stockport, had definitely refused to support it. Even in the case of those municipal bodies which had passed resolutions in favour of the separate assessment of land values, important minorities had dissented. The London County Council had again and again passed resolutions on these lines.

MR. BENN (Devonport): May I remind the hon. Member that the London

County Council most emphatically approve of the separate assessment of land values, and that they have reaffirmed that by overwhelming majorities.

MR. REMNANT said that the separate assessment of land values was explicitly condemned by the late Lord Farrer and the late Lord Hobhouse. When authorities were cited on an intricate economic problem, names should be weighed as well as counted. Even the supporters of the Bill would probably admit that in such matters the opinions of the late Lord Farrer and the late Lord Hobhouse outbalanced the opinion of a very large number of other County Councillors. The foreign precedents cited in support of the Bill were misleading, being drawn from countries where, unlike England, a fair contribution was made by personal property to the rates, whereas the Bill proposed new burdens on land without any contribution from personalty. In the United States land was taxed on its capital value, but personalty was also taxed in the same way. This was fair and equal; the Bill was unequal and therefore unfair. In German towns, again, local taxation was based on incomes. Dr. F. P. Koenig, H.B.M. Consul at Düsseldorf, wrote in a etter dated March 1st, 1905—

> "Local rates are raised by the local authorities based on the income-tax paid to the State. Here 14 per cent. of the State income-tax is paid in local rates."

That pretty well expressed his views on this subject. It was not that real property should escape taxation; but that there should be an equal contribution between real property and personalty. France was referred to last year. In France a very large contribution was made from personal property to the local rates by means of the Octroi duties. The hon. Member referred to the colonial precedents, but these were equally irrelevant. The national land tax in New Zealand was, as Mr. Pember Reeves pointed out in his book entitled "State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand," only a form of income-tax, land being there exempt from the income-tax paid by personalty. It was true that rates were levied on land values in some Australasian towns, but Australasian legislation, unlike the Bill, left landlords and tenants free to make their own future contracts with regard to the payment of the rate. That was, he was quite sure, admitted to be fair by all economists. The *Acton Express* (January 31st, 1903) published an official correspondence between the Vestry Clerk of Acton, Mr. W. Adam Brown, and the Town Clerks of Brisbane and Townsville (Queensland), and Palmerston North and Wellington (New Zealand). The Vestry Clerk of Acton asked for answers to eight questions. one of which was—

> "In the case of rented premises, leaseholds, etc., who pays the tax?"

The letter received from Wellingto left this question unanswered; but the letters received from the town clerks of the other three towns answered it as follows—

> "The occupier, unless under agreement with owners."—(Town Clerk of Palmerston North.)
>
> "Entirely a matter of arrangement between landlord and tenant, though the tenant is primarily liable."—(Town Clerk of Brisbane.)
>
> "The occupier is liable in the first instance, but, unless there is a special agreement to the contrary, he can recover the amount from the owner."—(Town Clerk of Townsville.)

In his opinion the advantages claimed for the Bill broke down as completely as the alleged precedents on examination. Thus it was said that land benefited by public improvements would be reached by the Bill. Had those who argued thus ever heard of the "recoupment" principle, under which the municipal body which carried out an improvement acquired the neighbouring land which was expected to be benefited by the improvement, and so took the whole of the increased value for the public? This principle was applied by the late Metropolitan Board of Works with brilliant success in the case of Northumberland Avenue.

MR. BENN: That was the only instance in London where the expense was recouped.

MR. REMNANT said that that was the leading case where a well-managed scheme resulted in a great success; but would the hon. Member for Devonport give the House some information as to what was happening in regard to the great Holborn to Strand improvement, where the London County Council did buy sufficient land on both sides of the area? He believed that either from want of management or from the onerous conditions imposed, the success of that scheme was anything but great. As regarded this Bill, it was quite true that the present system of allowing for repairs on a uniform basis in the assessment of property, instead of discriminating between the varying expenditures required for repairs according to the character and condition of each property, was unsatisfactory and called for radical reform. But the remedy provided by the Bill (Clause 5), which the hon. Member for the Elland Division of Yorkshire described in the debate on the Land Values Bill of last year, as he was reported in *Hansard*, as a "rough and ready differentiation," was not only cumbersome and expensive but obviously imperfect. Thus under the Bill there would be the smallest allowance for repairs where sites were most valuable, so that in all cases where the site value increased, there would be a smaller and smaller allowance on account of the repairs as the buildings got older and older and the repairs cost more and more. A far simpler and more perfect remedy was to make the allowance for repairs correspond with the actual circumstances of the property. There was no sort of difficulty about this, as the calculation was only one of the kind which surveyors were making daily, viz., to estimate in the case of a particular house the difference of the rental value under a repairing as compared with a non-repairing lease. It was in truth difficult to name any class of persons who would really and in the long run be benefited by the Bill.

Even the apparent gain to municipalities would prove a complete delusion. If they looked to occupied houses, there was no land value which escaped assessment under the ordinary law, as under the present system the burden of the rates undoubtedly really came upon the landlord. This was the view not only of high financiers like the late Mr. Gladstone and Sir Robert Giffen, but of practically the whole body of land surveyors and others who had actual experience in such matters, including the London County Council's own valuer, who, speaking on this subject some time ago, said that the —

> "Burden of rates fell entirely upon the owners of property and for the most part upon the owners of land."

This subject had been inquired into at great length both by the Town Holdings Committee of the House of Commons and by the Royal Commission on Local Taxation, and at the conclusion of these inquiries not one member of the Committee, not one of the Royal Commissioners, was found to deny that rents were affected by the agreement of tenants to pay the rates. The municipal authorities could, obviously, gain nothing by a clumsy system of rearranging charges upon those who, in fact, already bore them. If this principle was borne in mind it would be seen, further, that even the rating of vacant land and the sites of empty houses would ultimately confer no benefit on the ratepayers. The effect would be only to relieve the owner of occupied land of some part of the rates, and to cast that part on the owners of unoccupied land. The present practice, under which owners were taxed when they had income out of which to pay the taxes, was obviously more convenient to them, and did not ultimately cause any loss to the public.

It was said that the community might gain by compelling an owner who was "holding up" land to bring it into the market. Obviously, the object of an owner who kept his land out of the market was to obtain a greater price for it at a later date when the value had gone up. Of course, he might have miscalculated his chances; but in most cases the principle of self-interest might be trusted to act, and in the long run he would make a gain. The supporters of the Bill forget that in this matter the interests of the municipality and the owner were identical. If the owner did better for himself by waiting, the municipality also did better, because it got proportionately higher rates, *e.g.*, if a man owned vacant land on which a house could be built commanding an immediate rental of £50 a year, whereas in twenty years time a house commanding a rental of £100 a year could be built on the same site, the municipality should encourage the owner to wait. It paid the municipality much better to get the rates on £100 a year, beginning twenty years hence, than to get rates on only £50 a year, beginning at once. One was not impressed by the Marco Polo stories of the marvellous additions which would be made to the rateable value of Finchley and other localities if vacant land were rated. A surveyor could estimate with reasonable accuracy the market value of a particular plot of land. It was a totally different matter to estimate what would be the value of vacant land if the whole of the vacant land in a suburban or semi-rural district were treated as available for building at the same moment. In the latter case, the disturbance of normal market conditions would be enormous, and, though no doubt the valuers who had prepared such estimates for the English League for the Taxation of Land Values would say that they had allowed for this, there was no evidence that their allowance was adequate. One might be sure that if one of these estimates were submitted to an impartial arbitrator, and if, say, one of the many distinguished legal luminaries in this House were retained to cross-examine the valuers on behalf of the owners, a very different estimate would emerge. There were some points likely to escape the valuers which would be brought out in cross-examination which would lead to a very different result so far as the owners were concerned.

It was said that the rating of vacant land, by bringing more land into the market, would assist the housing of the working-classes. Those who argued thus forgot that the promoters of the Bill had ingeniously frustrated any such effect of a rate on vacant land by providing also for a rate on the sites of houses vacant. What was the object of imposing a rate to induce the landowner to provide more land for building if, at the same time, they deterred him from building on the land when it was provided? Those who drew glowing pictures of the advantages of taxation of vacant land should remember that no such advantages had attended the system in America, where it had long been tried. Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, who, as President of the Land Nationalisation Society, should be an acceptable authority to some hon. Members on the opposite side of the House, on his return from a visit to America in 1887, gave an address on November 1st of that year, in which he pointed out that every particle of land, whether built on or not, was taxed on its full selling value. He went on to say—

> "The results are very curious. To begin with, land speculation, which we think is bad enough with us, is but a trifle here compared with what it is in America. In America, land speculation is everywhere excessive. It is the great mode of making money, and it exists more or less all over the country wherever land is for sale and is not monopolised by great capitalists. This taxation on full values, however, usually causes very rapid changes of ownership. Men buy land on speculation for the purpose of selling it again quickly. They will not hold it long, because, if it is not used, the taxes will eat it up. Then somebody else buys it and sells it again pretty quickly, and thus land is continually changing owners until it is used for occupation or cultivation or for building. But the result of this rapid change of ownership—of each person trying to make a profit—is that land very rapidly acquires in America a price as high as in old settled countries like England and very often even higher. . . . Then, again, the result of these speculations is that in the cities—in the suburbs of the cities, in the places where working men live, we find the land cut up into still smaller strips than in England, and the houses are built still more closely together . . . . Notwithstanding all the great advantages they possess, we find houses crowded together, rents enormously high, and no gardens to the houses. One of the most disagreeable features of American houses to Englishmen is that there are no gardens."—("Land Lessons from America," published by the Land Nationalisation Society, pp. 9, 11, 12.)

Some of the evils which Dr. Wallace found in America, were already making themselves felt in Paris, where the rating of vacant land had recently been introduced. *Justice*, the organ of the Social Democratic Federation, said (October 26th, 1901)—

> "The taxation of land values is a favourite Radical panacea for political ills. We have frequently pointed out how little such a mere burden-shifting measure could do for the working class, and that it was of no practical importance to them. Under certain circumstances, however, it appears that the taxation of land values may actually become a real hardship to the common people. Recently the Municipality of Paris has decided to tax all land not built upon. The consequence has been what land-taxers would anticipate in such circumstances, that open spaces which were private property, but which were enjoyed by the people of Paris, are now to become the spoil of the jerry-builder. M. de Franqueville, for instance,

the President of the Academy, the proprietor of the exquisite park 'La Muette,' with its historic fame, was notified that he would have to pay 80,000 francs taxation for it. He did the only thing in his power, and has ordered that it should be sold out in lots, as he could not pay £3,000 a year for such a luxury and freely offer his hospitality to the Parisians. No doubt our single-taxers would acclaim such results as great and glorious victories for their principles, as the imposition of the tax had led to the owners having the land built upon, instead of keeping it as pleasure resorts for the public. But nobody but the owners will benefit by the change, and even if they had not handed their land over to the jerry-builder, to add to the already crowded state of the city, it would simply have meant that it answered their purpose best to keep it unoccupied. The sensible thing for the Paris Municipality to have done would have been to acquire the land for public use, or to exempt the owners from the tax so long as they allowed the public the use of their parks. As it is, the experiment has shown that the taxation of land values will not abolish landlordism, and may easily intensify its evils."

Some of the dangers of rating vacant land were clearly pointed out by the Local Government and Taxation Committee of the London County Council in old days. A Report of that Committee dated June 26th, 1891, signed by B. F. C. Costelloe, chairman, made the following admissions—

'We doubt, first, whether it is possible to force the land market by the indirect agency of rates upon landowners. It is the interest of landowners to bring their land into profitable occupation as quickly as they can; and it is especially the interest of the present possessors of land in settlement or in mortmain. There is no evidence that they do not follow that interest; some of them are only too hasty in doing so. Mr. Vigers tells us that London is overbuilt periodically every seven years. We doubt, secondly, whether, if the land market could be artificially forced by a system of rating, it would be found of advantage to Londoners; seeing that land would be covered which might have remained longer open, a number of houses would be built without the certainty of occupants and would be built cheaply and flimsily, and would remain empty, and would decay. Such a result would injure the neighbourhood, and would not benefit the rates."

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners.

The House went, and, being returned,

Mr. SPEAKER reported the Royal Assent to—

1. Army (Annual) Act, 1905.
2. Local Government Board's Provisional Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Act, 1905.

Mr. Remnant.

3. Leeds Corporation (Consolidation) Act, 1905.

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING) BILL.

Question again proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. REMNANT (continuing his speech) said he proposed now to show some of the remarkable results which would ensue if these proposals became law. The present Bill, like the Bill of last year, showed the utter hollowness of the cry for the "rating of ground rents." Under the Bill, during existing tenancies, all the rates on occupied premises were to be paid by the present ratepayers, and during future tenancies the land value rate on the land value as assessed at the time of the lease was to fall upon the immediate landlord, who himself was to have no power of deduction from those to whom he in his turn paid rent. Thus, except in the very rare cases where the ground landlord was himself the immediate landlord, ground landlords were never to be affected by the Bill. The ground landlord, who was principally aimed at in the agitation, which won many votes for Radical candidates at Parliamentary and municipal elections, was to be exempt for all time under the Bill. Surely that was not a result which the mover of the Second Reading desired.

Another remarkable result arose under Clause 1, Sub-section 4, which provided that where the annual land value exceeded the total rateable value rates were to be paid on the land value. Let it be supposed that the Bill became law, and that a landowner next year let a house for ninety years at £50 a year, that being the full value at the time of the lease, and that the annual land value was assessed as £20. Let it be supposed further that owing to some movement of population or other unforeseen cause the site increased enormously in value, and the annual land value was assessed as £150. What would then happen under the provisions of the Bill? Under Clause 1, Sub-section 4, the rateable value would go up to £150, and under Clause 3 as drafted the tenant could deduct from his rent the rates only on £20, that being "the land value as assessed at the time of the making of the lease." So that the unhappy tenant would have to pay rates on £130 instead of £20 simply because the site of his house was found to be more valuable, even though he was living in the same house and had no power under the provisions of his lease to pull it down and build another. Clause 1, Sub-section 3, provided for an allowance for restrictions on the use of land, but only in the case of existing leases, so that it would not help any tenant under a future lease. The effect of the Bill would thus be to impose crushing burdens upon the occupiers of houses standing upon sites that had increased largely in value, although these occupiers could gain nothing by that increase. This was surely a palpable absurdity, and one that no business man would wish to see perpetrated.

An even more remarkable result arose under Clause 3 of the Bill, as under the same clause in the Bill of last year. Under this clause the identity of the immediate landlord, from whose rent part of the rate on the land value was to be deducted, shifted under every sub-lease. If the hon. Member who introduced the Bill let a house to the hon. Member who seconded him for a term of years, a higher rent would, of course, be payable in consideration of the lessor's liability under the Bill to pay part of the land value rate. But let it be supposed that the hon. Member who seconded afterwards granted a sub-lease to a third person, who would then be the "occupier." Under the Bill the original lessor would be relieved of his obligation, for which he would be receiving consideration in the shape of a higher rent, and it would be transferred to the seconder, who had given consideration for escaping this very obligation. The thing was absurd. When this point was raised last year the hon. Member for the Elland Division of Yorkshire was reported in *Hansard* to have said—

> "That the intention was that under a new agreement the rate might be shifted back. Supposing there were a series of tenancies, the clause would obviously apply to every new lease, whether made in the second or third place."

The meaning of this interruption was not clear at the time; nor was it clear as reported in *Hansard*. But a year had passed, and the Bill remained exactly as it stood in this respect. It was true that there was a change at the end of the clause, which provided that the portion of the rate to be deducted by the "occupier" should be—

> "So much . . . as is payable on the land value as assessed at the time of the making of the lease or agreement."

instead of—

> "So much . . . as is based on the annual value of the land comprised in the hereditament."

This change affected only the amount to be paid, and in no way affected the identity of the person who had to pay it. This Bill, therefore, like the Bill of last year, had to be regarded as a measure for the unjust aggrandisement of those landlords whose tenants happened to sub-let to third persons. It might be suggested that this *reductio ad absurdum* could be avoided by giving the various intermediate landlords corresponding rights of deduction. The Bill would then only have run out of one absurdity into another, for it would then tax the owners of improved leasehold ground rents and fixed rent-charges, who had only a nominal reversion or no reversion at all. Dozens of Bills dealing with this subject had been introduced in the House of Commons during the last fifteen years, but none one of them had been free from equal absurdities. The explanation was not any want of care or skill on the part of the promoters or the draftsmen, but the inherent impossibility of fairly applying a system of taxation on capital values to contracts dealing with annual payments in respect of annual values. Hon. Members were trying to square the circle, and they could not succeed.

It might be asked why, if such legislation was as anomalous as its opponents maintained it to be, and would, as they believed, do no good to anybody, and much harm to most people, it was so strongly pushed forward year by year. The explanation was probably threefold. Some extravagant municipalities no doubt thought it might be well to cloak, though they could not really mitigate, the effects of municipal extravagance. Some politicians, having originally committed themselves to a foolish cry for the "taxation of ground rents," which they now knew to be impracticable, might feel themselves bound to press forward some sort of scheme for the further delusion of their dupes. But besides these forces there was a third force, viz., the body of persons in this country who had embarked on a campaign for the nationalisation of land or for the confiscation of rent. Of the hon. Members whose names appeared on the back of the present Bill, one, the hon. Member for North Camberwell, was a vice-president of the Land Nationalisation Society, and another, the hon. Member for Halifax, was the president of the English League for the Taxation of Land Values. Under this name hon. Members might not recognise the old English Land Restoration League, which had for its object the confiscation of all rents, by which means it hoped to crush out the landlords of the country.

MR. WHITLEY: Is the hon. Member quoting?

MR. REMNANT said that when the hon. Member was elected to the presidency of the League a member said that for over twenty years before he had listened to Mr. Henry George, and had been a supporter of the movement ever since, and the hon. Member expressed his concurrence with those views.

MR. WHITLEY: The hon. Member had better quote my words.

MR. REMNANT asked whether the hon. Member intended to advocate inside the House, as he advocated outside, the principles of Mr. Henry George. That was a Question which should be answered, because the mover of the Second Reading had stated that the object of the Bill was not the confiscation of rent, but it was backed by hon. Members who had declared that that was their sole object, and that they regarded the Bill not as an end, but as a means to an end. Another backer of the Bill had declared that it would be impossible to deal justly with the question without interfering with existing contracts. Last year the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife asked the House not to be led away by possible defects in the Bill, but to look at the intention. What was the intention of the present measure? Intention could be judged only by past speeches of promoters of the Bill, from which it appeared that the Bill was supported not as an end in itself, but as a means to an end, and that end was the confiscation of rent in accordance with the principles of the late Mr. Henry George. It was to be hoped that Parliament would never pass a Bill which, while ill-adapted to attain its avowed objects, would place a powerful weapon in the hands of those who preached the gospel of spoliation. He therefore appealed to the House to support the Amendment standing in his name.

*MR. BOND said the mover of the Second Reading in his clear and able exposition had displayed astonishing candour, having stated almost in so many words that he and his friends regarded this Bill as a mere instalment, and as paving the way to some more drastic changes in our rating system. What the nature of those changes was likely to be could be gathered from the speech of the hon. Member for Holborn. Such a proposal ought to be met on the principle of *principiis obsta*, and the hon. Member should not be allowed to carry a first instalment of that revolutionary programme which he and his friends were in the habit of advocating.

The hon. Member had on this occasion, as on the last, laid stress upon the support of various municipal councils. He (the speaker) was a little inclined to put that authority at a discount. He himself had had the honour of serving upon a municipal body—the London County Council—and he knew how easy it was to get a resolution of this kind passed without the resolution having commanded the intelligent assent of the majority. If they had a body of highly-trained officials such as the London County Council had, they could easily get prepared lengthy argumentative documents, which might or might not be in support of the Resolution ultimately passed, but those lengthy, elaborate, and able documents were not studied or mastered by more than a very few members of the Council. If they happened not to be in harmony with the prepossessions and views of the majority they were pooh-poohed as not worthy of the consideration of practical men. That had happened more than once in his experience on the London County Council. The real moving power behind these resolutions was something very different from that. The people who sat upon local councils were naturally very susceptible to the opinions, wishes, and interests, as they conceived them, of those who sent them to the councils. When a proposal came before them, under which it was pointed out that certain property which now was not chargeable to the rates could be brought into contributing to the rates, and that thereby there would be a reduction *pro tanto* of the rates which they themselves, and the bulk of their constituents, paid, they had a strong disposition to regard the proposal as almost obviously just. There might be some sort of lingering feeling that even proposals, however just they might appear from that point of view, required some sort of arumentative basis, and then perhaps certain exceptional cases would be quoted in justification.

It was argued, for instance, that the capital expenditure made out of the rates had an influence upon the value of the particular class of property dealt with by the Bill. That argument upon examination would be seen to be without basis. The real reason why rates were levied was to increase the convenience and comfort of the public and to insure performance of duties which by statute had been cast upon the municipality. The local bodies got their money as they went along, and spent it on libraries, baths and wash-houses, public buildings, and so forth. But the paving of the street and the making of the roads were the only items in regard to which it could be said that the expenditure out of the rates had any direct influence on the value of any given unoccupied property, and even in that case the owners in the first instance must have contributed to the making-up and laying out of the street. Possibly some advantage was derived from the presence of the police, and the protection they afforded, but the protection required for vacant land was very inconsiderable. The enhancement of the value of the land had nothing to do with the expenditure of the rates. Indeed, increased rates depreciated the value of vacant land, because when that land came into the market it would realise so much less according to the amount which it was known would be levied upon it when it was built upon. What enhanced the value of a plot of land was its natural and inherent advantages; that was to say, the fact that it happened to be situated in a district in which people were desirous of living. Therefore, to suggest that the value of land was increased by the enterprise of the neighbourhood was to rest the case on a fallacy.

In considering such proposals as these it was well to see how they would work as applied to particular cases. The Bill dealt principally with three classes of hereditaments. First of all, there were the ordinary occupied houses and buildings of a district. A separate valuation of the land on which they stood was to be made, and the separate value of the buildings would be ascertained. In regard to the bulk of houses already in existence this would not make any material difference in the amount of rate derived, because the present rate was usually on the compound value of the house and site. In regard to land occupied for agricultural or other purposes it was apparently suggested that it should be assessed upon its speculative and possible building value in the future. As far as the agricultural rent derived from that land was concerned, it was enhanced by the fact that the land was in the neighbourhood of a town, and the suggestion was that it did not represent the full selling value of the land. But that was a matter of pure speculation. He did not think it would have anything but a speculative value. He had had a great deal of experience in these matters, and he assured the hon. Member who had moved the Second Reading of this Bill that it was by no means so simple a business as it was sometimes made out to be. Where there was a demand for the building of houses they would nearly always have to bring in the intervention of the middleman to place the land in the market. As a rule an individual who had had experience in these matters, or a company, came forward and bought the land. Roads would be made and sewers put in and the land laid out for building purposes. Supposing for some reason or other the demand for houses in that district fell, trade became depressed, and taxes and rates went up, and money was not so plentiful, and in consequence nobody wanted to buy land there. The owners of that land would not only be out of pocket to the extent of the interest upon their capital and the money spent upon improvements, but under this Bill they would have to pay a heavy tax upon the site value. He did not think that state of things would conduce to bring about the result which hon. Members opposite were aiming at, namely, to bring more land into the market, and induce people to go in for building in order to relieve the pressure upon congested districts. So far from the Bill having that result, he believed it would have the opposite effect. In this Bill it was proposed to assess vacant land the agricultural value of which had been destroyed in consequence of its having been converted into a building estate. The result would not be to encourage the conversion of agricultural land into building estates in the neighbourhood of large towns. A large amount of capital was invested at the present time in companies whose business it was to develop estates in the neighbourhood of large towns, and this capital was held by a large number of small shareholders. He believed that if this Bill became law the *coup de grace* would be given to many of these enterprises, and that the shareholders would find their property impaired in value, if it did not disappear altogether. Those were consequences which, on the Ministerial side of the House, they could not face with equanimity.

He could assure the House that the considerations he was placing before them were of a very serious and important character, and it would really be a gross injustice, and gross hardship would be created, if this extra taxation were imposed on properties which represented a large amount of outlay in respect of which no present profit was being derived. It would really be taxation on stock-in-trade—for land was the stock-in-trade of many societies and individuals, which they had to turn over to get a profit—and that was a principle of taxation which had long since been abandoned in rating matters. He objected to the Bill because, among other things, it ran absolutely counter to the recommendations and advice of the Town Holdings Committee and the Royal Commission on Local Taxation. It was quite true that the Minority Report of the Local Taxation Commissioners contained a recommendation in reference to the advisablity of putting on a small site-value tax as part of a larger scheme which would bring in for contribution to the rates not only fixed property but personal movable property as well. He objected, also, to this Bill because of the inconvenience, difficulty, and expense which would certainly be experienced in determining what the site values were to be on which the taxation was to be levied. Witness after witness in evidence before the Royal Commission pointed out the extreme delicacy of the operation involved, and they dwelt upon the enormous expense which might be entailed. Friction would arise in regard to the proportion which the occupier could deduct from the amount paid to his landlord, and another great objection would be the very considerable expense entailed in determining site values. He imagined that at first there would be constant appeals, and this would involve considerable expense. [Cries of "Agreed, agreed."] In conclusion, he said it was because he felt strongly that this measure was unworkable that he heartily seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out all the words after the word 'That,' to the end of the Question in order to add the words, 'a satisfactory reform of the present system of local taxation must be arrived at not by piecemeal and partial treatment, but by such legislation as will secure fair and equitable results to all classes of the community'—(Mr. *Remnant.*)—instead thereof."

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. HARMOOD-BANNER (Liverpool, Everton), in a maiden speech, said that in supporting the Bill he was representing to a great extent the views of the great municipalities with which he had been in connection for many administrative years. He thought those hon. Gentlemen were quite wrong who supposed that the municipal bodies were not almost wholly in favour of this Bill. He had been connected with many of the committees who had considered this question before it reached the present stage, and he did not remember that at any of their meetings views were expressed contrary to the principles of this Bill. In fact, both Parties alike, so far as the municipalities were concerned, were fully alive to the necessity of the Bill and desirous of seeing it passed into law. He thought those hon. Members who were opposing this Bill would be well advised if they consulted their constituents, and made some efforts to ascertain their views upon this question. He thought they would find that in most instances they were in favour of this Bill.

The Amendment seemed to him to be a red herring drawn across the path, because he had no doubt that municipalities would be only too glad to consider a measure which would widen the basis of rateable value. He did not think that the Amendment which had been moved at all represented the views of the great municipalities. What they felt was the great inequality of taxation which at present existed. It was almost impossible for an occupier not to look around at the position of his town or city and consider on what account his rates had to be paid, and whether his neighbours were bearing a fair share of the rates. He saw land on one side of the road with buildings upon it and both the land and the buildings were rated. He saw a neighbour owning land on the other side of the road who put no buildings on it and who held that land unoccupied and useless for the purpose of contributing any part to the burdens of the community. He also saw that land continually improving in value without any additional cost to the owner of the land. The land on the one side of the road paid full rates for the making of the roads, the laying of sewers, the education of the people, and all the rates which fell upon the occupier, whilst his neighbour on the other side of the road bore no portion of the expense. It was almost impossible that any hon. Member would consider that that was a state of things which ought to continue. The incidence of taxation on owners of adjoining land was often most inequitable. There were plenty of illustrations, especially in the case of seaside places which grew up quickly. He had an instance in his mind where the occupiers desired to make a promenade and various amenities which would increase the value of the property of the landlord who owned the adjoining land. The landlord, however, declined to bear any portion of the expense, so the occupiers shouldered the burden. The result was that the value of the landlord's land was increased from £50 an acre to £300 or £400 an acre.

It was astonishing to find that the opponents of the Bill seemed rather to approve of the Minority Report of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation, for the Minority Report of that Commission recommended an additional rate on all site values. The Bill was intended to lighten the burden, not to increase it—to place it on a fair basis. The Bill would not increase the burden upon occupiers and owners who used their land to the fullest extent. Reference had been made to the fact that taxation did not fall upon the owners of land. If that was the case he could not see what objection there could be to this measure, because that was its object. The aim of this Bill was that a fair share of the burden of taxation should be placed upon the owner. Some hon. Members appeared to think that it would be a good thing to tax land in order to take away the grants in aid of local taxation. In regard to that proposal, he was sure that municipalities, whilst they were extremely anxious to have this Bill, did not want their grants-in-aid taken away. The chief point was whether it could be carried out with justice and without difficulty, for he did not see how the principle of the measure could be controverted. He thought that land which was wanted, yet was withheld from public uses, should be rated just the same as land which was not withheld. Undoubtedly there might be some hardship in the case of land on the outskirts of a city which was not quite ripe for development, but he thought the owners of such land could be properly protected.

He was bound to say he did not think there would be much expense in carrying out the measure. If hon. Members would recollect the way in which the general assessment for rateable value was carried out, they would agree with him when he said that it was carried out in a very fair spirit indeed, and there was no desire to press the rate up unreasonably. Why should they, when dealing with land, apply a different measure of justice to that which they applied in the case of ordinary rating. He knew that difficulties sometimes arose, and he knew of a case where an increase of £63 in rating was accompanied by costs amounting to £650, but such cases were few and far between. There was also the question of the tenants under leases which had been referred to by the hon. Member for Holborn. If they would look at Clause 3 they would find that the leaseholder was pretty well protected. He was quite certain there was no intention to place leaseholders at this disadvantage. The measure was only intended to carry out the rating of land values in a fair and proper manner. One thing provided for by a clause in the Bill was that existing contracts should be thoroughly respected, so that the proposal now made would not touch the old basis of rating. There was a feeling in some quarters that leaseholders should be taxed. In Lancashire and Yorkshire there were a large number of small investors in building societies and co-operative societies who had put their money into ground rents, and therefore, in their interest, it was decided to set aside any idea of interfering with existing contracts. It seemed to him that there was no sense of proportion observed by the opponents of the Bill. It was only a small matter—a matter of adjusting the rates so that they should fall equally on all who ought to pay. But their opponents had endeavoured to put a wider interpretation on the Bill by bringing in the question of land nationalisation, and other theories regarding land with which it did not deal. What the Bill proposed to do was to confer a simple measure of justice on all ratepayers, and that the proposal was so regarded was shown by the fact that a large number of municipalities had voted for it, and taken pains to bring their views before the attention of Members of this House. The supporters of the measure belonged not to one Party, but included the representatives of all sides of politics.

MR. ASQUITH (Fifeshire, E.) said he had listened to the speech of the hon. Gentleman with great interest, and congratulated him upon his effective first appearance in the debates of the House. This question of the rating of land values had been before the House on so many occasions during the present Parliament that it would be an unpardonable consumption of the time of the House on his part, especially as he had expressed his opinions on the subject very fully last year, to speak more than for a few moments. Whether from the point of view of justice or the point of view of policy, it was unquestionable that land values at present were not fairly rated. Why should urban land, unoccupied but ripe for development, enjoy an enhanced value from the common expenditure of the community without making any actual contribution of its own to the rates? From the point of view of policy the effect of such a system, by throwing the main burden of the local rates upon buildings, was to raise rents, to discourage building, and to cripple and check the natural and healthy development of the community. On both these grounds it seemed to him that the first principle of the Bill, namely, that urban land ought to be fairly and adequately dealt with, was one that ought to be embodied in legislation. The other consideration was that it was both necessary and practicable for that purpose to have a separate assessment of land from that of other rateable subjects. That was not so much a matter of principle as of machinery. It was clear, for the reasons he had stated, that if they granted the first principle, the other was a mere corollary of it, and the only question in regard to the second was how far, under the existing conditions of social and municipal life, the separate assessment of land was capable of application.

He was not going into any general discussion of the matter, but he wanted to put before the House two or three practical considerations. In the first place this proposal, which he could remember, without going very far back, as having been regarded as the fad of economic doctrinaires—and that was still the view of one or two hon. Members—had now behind it the active and growing support of the governing bodies of almost all the great urban communities of the kingdom. He found that there were supporting the Bill 166 municipal corporations, and 152 urban districts; and in addition sixty-four Poor Law unions in England, Wales, and Ireland, and sixty-four parish councils in Scotland. A practical matter of rating which commanded not merely the academic or lethargic support, but the active support of these large bodies of persons who were every day engaged in the actual task of municipal administration, might be said to have passed from the region of speculation into that class of politics that called for legislation. Moreover, he was told that, comparing this year with last, there were 200 more municipal bodies in favour of the scheme. That was a practical consideration which he thought the House might well keep in view when considering whether the Bill should be read a second time. Another practical point which he should like to urge upon the House was this. The practicability and beneficial results of legislation of this kind were growingly attested by the experience of other countries. He would not go over them again, having dealt with them last year. They had the experience of the Colonies, and especially New Zealand and Queensland, but he would like to call attention to the case of the Kingdom of Prussia. Since 1899 a system substantially the same as that proposed by this Bill had been optional in Prussia. In a book on the "Taxation of Land Values" by Lawrence Zimmerman, he found the following—

> "The taxation of land values was strongly recommended in the year 1899 by the Prussian Minister of Finance, and in Germany no fewer than seventy-one towns and fifty-three rural communities have introduced the system, and with excellent results. . . . During the present year, encouraged by the effective results of the new system, the Prussian Ministers of Finance and of the Interior have issued a Memorandum to induce all towns to adopt the new system. They point out that the practical experience which has been gained proves that the system of the rating of land values is well adapted in numerous places, especially in those where the population is increasing and the land values rising, to effect a considerable lessening of the burden of taxation for those landowners who most need to be spared by increasing the taxation of those who can best afford to pay more."

MR. REMNANT said that he called attention before the right hon. Gentleman came into the House to the fact that in Germany the local rates were raised by the local authorities on the basis of the income-tax.

MR. ASQUITH said he did not think the interruption was in any way relevant to the point. He wished to bring before the House the direct evidence which was now being obtained from skilled persons as to the effect the assessment of unoccupied land, which was ripe for development and which at present escaped taxation, would have, if applied, as it could be without difficulty, to the actual conditions of the urban communities of this country. He quoted to the House last year the remarkable facts in connection with an experimental valuation made in the urban district of Finchley. He understood that since then a similar process had been applied, for experimental purposes of course, to other urban communities also adjacent to the Metropolis, and he had with him the figures which had been supplied in regard to two of them. The object of this valuation was to show what effect, after all proper deductions had been made for depreciation and so forth, the rating of land now unrated, but capable of profitable development for residental and business purposes, would have on the actual rates. The valuation being for that purpose only, public parks, woods, recreation grounds, and spaces of that kind would, of course, be excluded. It was calculated that, in the case of Hornsey, the capital value of the land brought in would be £887,000, which at 3 per cent. would amount to £22,610 of rateable value, and the result would be a reduction in the rates of that community from 7s. 6d. to 7s. 2d. in the £. This did not imply a very violent change, but it did seem to show that land which was at present deriving benefit from the local enterprise and progressive spirit of the municipality escaped a burden which it ought legitimately to bear. A similar calculation in regard to Fulham showed that the capital value of the land brought in would be £575,000, which at 3 per cent. would amount to £17,250. In that case there would be a reduction of the rates from 7s. 4d. to 7s. 2d. if land values were brought within assessment. He had no doubt that if the same process were applied in provincial communities still more striking results would be derived No one, so far as he was aware, certainly none of his hon. friends who were responsible for the Bill, put it forward as a panacea; it was a mild, modest instalment of rating reform which had the hearty approval of a vast number of municipalities of the country with the best practical knowledge of the conditions of the case. It could be adopted by this House without prejudice to the ultimate settlement of the larger questions as between urban and rural interests, or between the local and Imperial Exchequer. He trusted the Secretary to the Local Government Board, whose competence to deal with these questions all would acknowledge, would be able to express the opinion of the Government on this matter. Last year it was treated, like so many things in these days, as an open question. It would be satisfactory for the House to know the attitude of mind of the Government to-day; and he trusted it would not be long before the House came to a decision.

*Sir JOHN ROLLESTON (Leicester) said he could not take the view of the right hon. Gentleman opposite in regard to the laws of the Kingdom of Prussia. There were many laws in Prussia which he was sure the right hon. Gentleman would be the last to ask them to imitate. There were so many points to be considered in this Bill that he could not expect to examine all of them. He would, therefore, only refer to one or two, but especially to one great objection which presented itself to his mind, and that was the rating of land not built upon on its assumed capital value. To assume that land which had not yet found a market for building purposes would some day do so was a presumption which was not justified by experience. He said without fear of contradiction that no demand for land on which to erect buildings arose without being promptly satisfied. The demand for land on which to erect buildings was irrepressible, and if there was no supply in one direction it was found in another; but, although there were of course exceptions to the rule, it was safe to say that no one kept land out of the market for which there was a genuine building demand. That would indeed be a bad financial operation, and he who conducted it was the loser and no one else. There was, according to his experience, no ground for the assertion that building land was generally withheld from the market, nor was the operation called "forcing land into the market" in any way possible. By taxation a weak holder of land might be compelled to take anything he could get for it, but who was the forwarder? He might be ruined, but there was no economic force which could provide the capital for putting up buildings on land thus forced into the market, nor for creating the population to live in them if they were built, and it was not in the interests of municipalities to encourage overbuilding. If land could be had for nothing it would not insure building upon it. The pretensions, therefore, that taxing uncovered land as proposed in the Bill would be in the interests of the municipalities was in his opinion both presumptuous and empirical. In the first case it would cause widespread ruin and imperil many mortgage investments. It would completely crush the speculating builder or pioneer, and it would put an intolerable tax upon the property of land and building societies in which the savings of working people were invested.

Was it in the interests of municipalities to crush the speculator, the goose that laid the golden egg, the pioneer who put up the dwellings for working people almost always in advance of the requirement? The great municipalities were greatly in debt to the speculator who had made them what they now were and largely created the income which they now enjoyed. Was it not Mr. Cubitt who raised streets across the swamps behind Buckingham Palace and created Belgravia? That tract of land that was offered to the Crown in

George the Third's time for £20,000, but refused by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Had it not been for the risk undertaken by a private person, a pioneer, another generation might have elapsed before that beautiful part of London, with its vast rateable value, was built upon, and even then it would have been a private person who would have risked the development and not a municipality. It was the same in all towns. Some of them had grown largely in the last generation owing to the expansion of their trade and commerce. Who had built the houses, the workshops, and largely the factories to anticipate those requirements? It was invariably the same pioneer—the man who took risks, who bought a tract of land, who expended large sums in making streets and sewers, and equipping it for the use of the population that he thought was coming, so that overcrowding in most provincial towns was a thing unknown. Even now in most of the large midland towns there were thousands of houses empty. This person was largely a borrower from banks and from mortgagors, and no money was more usefully or legitimately, and in most cases more securely, lent than to those speculating builders. The loans were for the development of our own cities, and for paying wages to British workmen, and not for the purpose of developing other countries and for paying wages to foreign workmen for which purpose money lent to foreign Governments was mainly devoted. This pioneer, and this form of business and investment, the Bill before the House was designed to crush, and he could not imagine any movement so fatal to the interests of our great cities. For certainly no prudent man would ever again run the risk of buying land, and making streets and sewers on it, while he knew that if perchance he had miscalculated, and it got left on his hands, he would be ruined by taxation. Not to mention existing holders of building land who would throw up their efforts to develop and to create a rateable value for their municipality. Again, in his constituency, and he thought it was so in most towns, there were large tracts of lands, hundreds of acres in the borough, in which working men had become speculators, by paying on a small weekly instalment system, and at length becoming owners of a plot on which a house was frequently built. This system was growing and spreading; very much, he contended, to the advantage of working people who enjoyed these plots as gardens until it was convenient to build a house. This system was to be discouraged by the onerous tax which this Bill proposed that municipalities should place upon these plots.

He had observed the growth of many cities and towns in this country, but he need not go beyond that near which he had lived all his life, and which he now represented. He had seen the land on which he used to shoot partridges in abundance now covered with factories and houses, and at closing time what were once quiet rural retreats now sounded with the tread of thousands of busy working men and women. He had seen in the same town land that was sold thirty-six years ago, and where streets and sewers were immediately constructed, grass was now growing over the streets again, and no houses had yet been erected. What was the reason for those two extremes? Why was one district taken and the other left? He had observed that the successful conversion of land into town was done mainly by the application to it of capital, brains, and energy, and he had also observed that these were mainly provided by the speculating pioneer to whom, as one interested in progress and development, he heartily wished God-speed. The town which he represented had been largely built by this class and it was a good town. It had grown more rapidly in proportion than, he thought, any other town; it was better provided with parks and open spaces than most towns; it had almost the lowest death-rate; epidemic diseases were almost unknown; an additional supply of water from the Peak of Derbyshire was on its way to provide that great necessity of life for the increased population that was anticipated, and yet the chairman of the finance committee was able last year to announce a reduction in the rates of 3d. in the £ and this year 1d. It was a well-managed town, and he was glad to think that its corporation had not sent him any resolution asking his support to this Bill.

As he had said. Leicester had been largely built by the speculator. The requirements of its population in the way of housing had been provided for, and well provided for, by private enterprise. Building was and had been a great industry employing many thousands of people; in it many millions of money had been turned over again and again, with profit to the bankers and with good return to the investors. That industry on the whole had contributed largely to the prosperity of the town, and now there came before Parliament a Bill, which, if carried and applied by that town, would clog the wheels of that great industry and crush those who conducted it.

The measure would bring not plenty and prosperity, but poverty and adversity. If this Bill were applied, as it at present stood, to Leicester, the corporation might cancel all orders for provision for future population; might content itself with living on the progress of the past, as there would be but little in the future. But he hoped that when the provisions of this Bill were better known many enlightened corporations would observe its great defects and withdraw from it that support which they had hitherto accorded it. He ventured to say that, as a rule, all land in this country that was wanted for buildings was built upon, and who was there with sufficient occult knowledge to say what land would be built upon in the future and what land was worth a large sum now because it might perhaps be built upon? Many things would have to happen, the course of trade would have to improve, new industries would have to be established, and new factories would have to be put up in this country if an increasing population was to want more houses. That might be the case. He hoped it would, but it was not a certainty, and no one, he contended, ought to be taxed on a speculation or by an assessor who estimated that the increase of population was merely a matter of arithmetical calculation based on the increase in the last generation. He submitted that there was no ground for such an assumption, and that taxation on speculative values, values that might never be realised, was not a proper system of taxation for this country. He admitted one case, and one case only, in favour of this Bill, and that was where a central site in a city was occupied by poor property, while it was required for a much superior class of property which would contribute a much larger sum in rates to the municipality. If in that case the obdurate owner refused to rebuild, or to let any one else do so, then he thought the owner should be rated on the best use, and not the worst, to which his site could be put. But how many cases were there of this kind? He did not think that fools were so plentiful as seemed to be supposed, and surely a few cases such as this did not constitute sufficient pretext to place upon the Statute-book what, he contended, would be a law creating far more injustice than justice.

Sir John Rolleston.

With regard to the separate valuation of buildings and site, he had only to say there was no practical difficulty in doing this. It was done every day in valuations of a certain kind, but at the same time the value of a house was usually reckoned to include the site; the site was an essential portion of the house and without the site there could be no house. The idea was clearly to get at the value of the site in order to rate the house when empty. But why should they consider the case so much of empty houses. It was municipalities themselves which emptied houses by high rates. Let them rather keep the houses full by better and more provident management. If houses remained full he did not see what was to be gained by a separate assessment of buildings and site. Probably many assessments might thereby be reduced. The agitation for this Bill was a tempest in a teapot, and if it should become law the results expected would not, in his opinion, be realised. They could understand extravagant municipalities hunting about for a wider system of taxation as rates were at present levied on a limited class of people and a limited class of property, but he contended that by worrying realty the evil would only be increased. Some municipalities, however, went for personalty as well, and were making attacks on the machinery used in production, the sewing machines even used in many trades, the tools of working men and women. He thought that other property than realty should be brought in as rateable, but last of all machinery used in production. Rather get the safes and strong rooms open and rate some of the property hidden away there, rather than keep attacking that which was visible and spread out before the eyes of everyone merely because it was easy. He knew it might be said that municipalities expended money for the benefit of real property and not for other property. He denied that proposition. The expenditure of municipalities was for persons and not for property, and certainly in the case of the man who had land, or bought land, and made streets and sewers, and built houses, it was he that made the municipality and not the municipality that made him. This Bill was not one that, in his opinion, would be a useful measure on the Statute-book. It was a Bill of amateurs; a plaything for the political platform; and not one that would be of real use even to those municipalities that desired it; one of which he was glad to say that he did not represent—but one whose best interests he was sure he was serving by opposing with what small force he could command the Bill that was now presented for Second Reading.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN (Kilkenny, N.) said that in view of the fact that over sixty Members of the Irish Party intended to take part in the division on this Bill he wished to state the views of that Party in regard to the subject-matter of the measure. He had been somewhat astonished at the eloquent peroration of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, in which he described this Bill as a mere plaything for the political platform. He thought that was a strong statement to make, and rather an insulting observation considering that 500 corporate and municipal bodies in this country had petitioned in favour of the measure. Of course, any measure which proposed to advance the democratic cause would always command the denunciation of the hon. Gentleman and his friends. Although this Bill did not affect Ireland, the Irish Party proposed to vote for it because they were in favour of its principle. The taxation of ground values was an exceedingly important question not only to England and Scotland, but also to Ireland. Unfortunately, the value of land in towns in Ireland was not so great as in Great Britain, and the agrarian condition of Ireland was responsible for that. In one city alone, the great city of Belfast, was this question of striking importance. Only a few years ago the taxpayers of that city voted over £500,000 for the building of a city hall for that great and growing community. Immediately after the erection of the building the value of the shops in the neighbourhood increased from £100 a year to £300 a year; and the landlords, many of whom had never seen Belfast, secured an increased income of £200 a year without the outlay of a single penny, simply because the ratepayers of Belfast had spent half a million on an institution for city purposes. That single fact was, he thought, a strong argument in favour of the taxation of land values. Since the division took place last year on this Bill he understood that over 200 rating authorities had joined the most powerful combination since the Anti-Corn League in favour of the proposals made in this Bill. All the leading corporations in the country including the London County Council, the town councils of Glasgow, Manchester, Liverpool, etc., were in favour of the Bill, and on that account he and his colleagues of the Irish Party would support it in the division lobby with great pleasure.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. GRANT LAWSON, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) said he was sorry the hon. Member for Kilkenny had preceded him in the debate, because he hoped presently to show that, if this Bill were extended to Ireland, Irish farm tenants who lived in urban districts would suffer by the Bill, and on that ground he was going to appeal for Irish support to secure its rejection. It was from no want of respect to the right hon. Member for East Fife that he did not rise when that right hon. Gentleman sat down; but his hon. friend the Member for Leicester was entitled to be heard, as he was chairman of the Surveyors' Institute, and when they were discussing a matter on which surveyors could express an expert opinion, the House ought to hear the views of that hon. Gentleman. He could not attempt to follow the hon. Gentleman opposite in his hurried tour round the world in order to obtain evidence in favour of the proposals made in the Bill. No doubt this system had been adopted in other countries; but he did not know where the supporters of the Bill had obtained their evidence in regard to Prussia, because Berlin had repudiated this system in 1899 and had never since re-adopted it because the inconvenience of it was so great.

MR. TREVELYAN asked if the hon. Gentleman could give the House the names of the places in Germany that had adopted the Act of 1893 which regulated the special rates charged on land held for speculative purposes.

MR. GRANT LAWSON said he quite admitted that some places had adopted the Act, but Berlin was the leading case. This Bill was a serious attempt to get at and to rate for present needs the profits which might, or might not, at some future time come to the owners of urban land. Two other schemes for this purpose had been brought forward, one two years ago and the other three years ago. Those schemes had been frankly abandoned, and no doubt it would now be admitted that they were a little ridiculous. It was said that this Bill was drafted to a considerable extent on the same lines as the Bill of last year. But there was a new provision in this Bill, in Section 3, which would make it have a result precisely opposite to that which the Bill of last year was intended to produce. The Bill of last year was meant to provide that any increase in the rate due to the increase of the site value should fall on the site owner. But Section 3 of this Bill made the owner of the site liable only for so much of the rate as was payable in respect of the land value as assessed at the time of making the lease or agreement. Therefore, if a man let his land for ninety-nine years, the burden of any increased rates during that period would fall, not on the landowner, who would only pay on the value of the land when he made the lease, but on the lessee.

Mr. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): He would only pay on what he was receiving.

Mr. GRANT LAWSON said that his hon. friend was thinking of the old scheme of the taxation of ground rents.

Mr. McCRAE said it was rather unfair of the right hon. Gentleman to misrepresent him. He was dealing with the scheme of to-day; that whoever had an interest in the land would pay in respect of that interest, and that interest only.

Mr. GRANT LAWSON said he was taking the actual words of the Bill. The lessee was to be—

> "entitled to deduct from rent payable by him so much of any rate paid by him, in respect of the hereditament, as is payable on the land value as assessed at the time of the making of the lease or agreement."

He thought they would all be agreed that it was most essential that valuations should be, as far as possible, an exact science—that it should be an effort of the mind and not of the imagination. But, under this Bill, the valuer would be asked to say what a hypothetical tenant would give for a hypothetical purpose. Indeed, this Bill carried the valuer of the future out of the reach of realities into the realms of fancy. The hon. Member for Holborn had analysed the Bill, had taken it part by part, and had reduced it absolutely to nothing. Yes, and he believed that speech of his hon. friend was the result of months and months of study. The hon. Member for Leicester had also told the House that the details of the Bill were entirely unfair and unworkable. He believed it was supposed to be a great educational advantage to members of the Government to listen to the Opposition. He had heard every debate on the principles of this Bill in Parliament, so that he should be a highly-educated official on the subject, but he could not recollect that any of the hon. Gentlemen opposite, who were connected with the land or were directors of assurance companies and similar institutions, had brought his practical experience to help the House with the consideration of measures of this kind. If he were in a Court of law he should submit that this was a highly technical question, and, as the other side had not produced their experts, who were in Court, there was no case to go to the jury.

If words were to have their ordinary meaning in this Bill, he should not object to the provision of a column setting out "the separate annual value of sites and houses." The annual value of a site on which a house stood, apart from the structure that was upon it, was obviously *nil*. What annual value did land under a dock produce, apart from the dock that was upon it? But when they got to Sub-section 2 of Clause 1 they were plunged into a sea of fancy. For the purposes of this Act the annual value of land was to be deemed to be an amount equal to 3 per cent. of the amount for which the land could be sold as by a willing seller to a willing buyer. How wonderfully that expression "deemed to be" was taken hold of by the draftsman Throughout the Bill everything was "deemed to be" something which everyone knew it was not to be. The wildest supposition was that there would be willing buyers ready to take the place of those who had been rated out of their property by such a proposal as this. As to valuation hon. Members did not seem to have considered the glut that would be caused by every scrap of land in an urban district being put in the market at once. Everyone knew that in an old settled country like England nearly every piece of land in an urban district was subject to covenants, easements, etc. Were they to be considered? It was true that under this Bill those covenants were to be considered, but they were to be embodied in a document to which the valuer had no access. With that exception the land was to be deemed to be held in fee simple and free from encumbrances; but a vast amount of land was not so held. Yet these obstacles were to be "deemed" to be waved away by the Bill. That showed what a tangled web they weaved when they "deemed" a thing to be something it was not. Those who had to do with compensation cases knew that the best valuers differed widely in the estimate they made of capital value of premises under the Land Clauses Acts. Under these Acts they dealt with a thing that existed. How much wider would their opinion be if they had to deal with a hypothetical case such as the value of land without a house and the value of land with a house on it. Such valuations would therefore be very arbitrary.

As to the cost of the assessments proposed by this Bill expert evidence given before the Royal Commission showed that it would run into millions. For separating site from structure in London alone the cheapest estimate was £400,000; the estimates of other surveyors varied between £2,000,000 and £4,000,000, but the net result for the whole country was that the valuation separating site from structure would cost £18,000,000. And when they had separated the site from the structure and wasted this money who would benefit? The Bill respected existing leases for the present, so that if they increased the rateable value by taking the capital instead of the annual value of the site, the burden fell on existing lessees, with the result that the shopkeepers and those owning houses in the centre of a town would find their rates increased for the benefit of those living in the suburbs. Then in future the lessor, "notwithstanding any agreement to the contary," had to pay part of the rates. Commenting on that proposal, Lord Balfour said that it was a danger that "might lead to extravagance and plunder." But the supposed advantage accruing from the principle was to be educational, to teach the less enlightened clasess that the rates did not really fall on the tenant entirely. He was in favour of such a method of education, but the cost entailed was too much for these primary schools of political economy.

This was a proposal to tax all land in an urban district on its capital value. He did not wish to argue the absurdity of such a proposal as that, but only to point out some of the disastrous and unforseen results that might follow from it. Lord Balfour, who was supposed to favour this sort of thing, said that to put this tax upon land ripening for building would be both anomalous and oppressive. The House forgot that "urban district" was a purely technical term and that it was in the power of the

Local Government Board to make every district urban whether in fact it was urban or not; that there were hundreds of thousands of acres of agricultural land in urban districts the whole of which was liable to pay taxation on its capital value. How would it fall on the farmers, he spoke as a farmer himself, he had a farm in one of the urban districts of which the rent was £1 an acre and the rates after making all deductions 3s. That land was estimated to be worth £300 an acre capital value. Under this Bill it would be rated at an imaginary income of £9 an acre, with the result that the rates alone would be 27s. an acre, so that the landlord himself would not only lose all the rent he got out of the land but the farmer would pay 4s. more per acre for the privilege of farming the land in that district. There were other trades besides farming which required large amounts of land in the urban districts, market gardeners, and nurserymen, coal, and timber merchants and occupiers of large factories, all men who gave employment to the most labour in these urban districts would have their assessments increased. Then let them look also at the lungs of our great cities. Let them imagine this Bill applied to London and let them imagine Olympia rated at its capital value as a site, or the Crystal Palace. If that were done the rates would absolutely kill the undertakings within a year. How, might he ask also, was the "Oval" to be kept going as a county cricket ground if it was to be rated on the capital value of the site. There was another consideration; hon. Members representing boroughs knew to their cost that there were many small borough cricket clubs who were able to obtain ground at a small rent, but if the provisions in this Bill were to be applied to these small cricket grounds he failed to see how the clubs could go on, unless the Members of this House increased their subscriptions very largely. The only thing which would be left would be the parks, which, being Crown property, were not rateable, and churchyards, which were freed from rates under another law.

Then as to the question of vacant houses, the result of rating them would be to make people less willing to build houses. Let them take the case of a man who had built or bought a house. If he could not get a tenant at once he was to be compelled to pay rates on a property out of which he got nothing and in respect of which he might be at a loss with regard to repairs which he had to make. He denied that the spending of the rates improved the value of land. It actually did it harm, for not long since a man had refused to take a farm on his own property because the rates would make it too expensive. What improved the value of land was the construction of railways and works of that kind, and if landowners were to be taxed on the capital value of the land they ought to be taxed for the benefit of the railway which had increased the value of the land and not for the benefit of a corporation which had done nothing. This was supposed to provide a permanent source of fresh taxation, but competent surveyors had pointed out that the operation of this Act would destroy the value of all the land in the urban districts, and if they destroyed the value of the land what became of the property on which they were to levy rates. It was practically killing the goose that laid the golden eggs. It was said that people held their land for a rise. Was that criminal? The London County Council, they all knew, did that, and there were many hon. Gentlemen in the House who held securities for a rise, and if the man who held his land for a rise was cheating the rate collector, hon. Gentlemen who held other securities for a rise were cheating his right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He did not see how any difference was to be made in that respect between realty and personalty.

They had heard in this Bill something about a State-created monopoly. Anybody who had a picture had a State-created monopoly of that picture. Did anybody suggest that the authorities were to tax pictures in consequence. It was said that the community wanted land. Well, if the community wanted land for any lawful and legitimate purpose it could always obtain it by means of a Provisional Order. The real truth of this matter was that certain individuals coveted the plots of their neighbours. He was sorry to see that the Bill had been supported on the ground that it would force land into the market and would take from the present owners a large part of their profits. If that was the object of the Bill there were not words in the Parliamentary vocabulary strong enough to enable him to express his opinion of it. He knew a good deal of pressure had been put on hon. Members to induce them to vote for the Bill. That pressure came from a conference of what were called the spending authorities. Surely the opinions of Royal Commissions and Committees of the House were more to be respected, and there was no Report of any Commission or Committee in favour of the Bill. Should it then be passed because this conference, which had taken no evidence, supported it? Let that conference call expert evidence on both sides and he was certain that they would arrive at the conclusion that the Bill was unworkable and unjust.

SIR HENRY KIMBER (Wandsworth), who spoke amid great interruption, was understood to say: The hon. Member who had introduced this measure had carefully abstained from telling the House the principles upon which this Bill was founded, or of giving any reason why those principles should hold good. He himself failed to understand anything beyond the fact that, in the minds of the promoters, the Bill was a step in the right direction. How much further the hon. Gentleman who moved the Second Reading proposed to go he did not say. Of course, all local authorities who spent the ratepayers' money would be glad to have a larger amount of rates to spend than before, and were glad to get from one class a tax twice over, especially when that class was supposed to be composed of rich men whom they pillaged with perfect immunity as they did not come on their councils. The Bill, in his opinion, was an interference with the principle of freedom of contract which was one of the greatest principles which the commerce and industry of the world ought to preserve. [At this point the remarks of the hon. Member became inaudible owing to the loud and insistent cries of "divide" from the NATIONALIST Benches.]

Question put.

The House divided: Ayes, 202; Noes, 112. (Division List No. 141)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert Henry
Atherley-Jones, L

Mr. Grant Lawson.

Austin, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bell, Richard
Benn, John Williams
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bright, Allan Heywood
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cautley, Henry Strother
Chamberlayne, T. (S'thampton)
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cullinan, J.
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
Delany, William
Denny, Colonel
Devlin,CharlesRamsay(Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Dobbie, Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Ellice,Capt E.C(S.Andrw'sBghs
Emmott, Alfred
Evans,SirFrancisH.(Maidstone
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Findlay,Alexander (Lanark,NE
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.HerbertJohn
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (MerthyrTydvil
Harmsworth, R. Leicester)
Harwood, George
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt.Hon. Sir ArthurD.
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Higham, John Sharp
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope,J.F. (Sheffield,Brightside
Horniman, Frederick John
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Jones,David Brynmor(Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, P. J. (Westmeath,N.)
Kennedy, Vincent P.(Cavan,W.
Kenyon,Hon.Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kilbride, Denis
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Hugh Alex.(Donegal, W)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F.(Accrington
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mitchell, Edw.(Fermanagh,N.)
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen
Moss, Samuel
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, William
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly,James (Roscommon,N.
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pemberton, John S. G.
Perks, Robert William
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Randles, John S.
Reckitt, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas,David Alfred(Merthyr)
Thompson,Dr.E.C(Monagh'n,N
Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R.)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.
Woodhouse,SirJ.T.(Huddersf'd
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Trevelyan and Mr. Harmood-Banner.

NOES.

Acland-Hood,Capt.SirAlex.F
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allsopp, Hon. George
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Joceline Fitzroy
Baird, John George Alexander
Balfour,Rt.Hn.A.J.(Manch'r
Balfour,RtHnGerald W.(Leeds
Banbury, Sir Frederick George

Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Boulnois, Edmund
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Glasgow
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coddington, Sir William
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Dalkeith, Earl of
Davenport, William Bromley
Dimsdale, Rt Hn. Sir Joseph C.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs)
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Gretton, John
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Kimber, Sir Henry
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monm'th)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. N. R
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth)
Majendie, James A. H.
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E. (Wigt'n)
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Morpeth, Viscount
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Purvis, Robert
Rankin, Sir James
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, Sir H. (Renfrew)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Rt. Hn. J. Parker (Lanarks
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Hon. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Ox'd Univ.
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Turnour, Viscount
Valentia, Viscount
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wrightson, Sir Thomas

TELLERS FOR THE NOES — Mr. Remnant and Mr. Bond.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

The Bill was then read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc."—(*Mr. Trevelyan.*)

And, it being after half-past Five of the clock, and objection being taken to further proceeding, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

MR. MACVEAGH (Down. S.) said he would like to ask the Patronage Secretary whether he could make any statement with regard to the Junior Lord of the Treasury. He himself was living in the fear from day to day that owing to the Government Whips' office being undermanned the Government might be the victims of a snap division, and that as most of the Irish Members were leaving town that day they would not be able to take part in it. The hon. Member for Oldham or Halifax might——

MR. SPEAKER here interrupted, and said he ought, according to Standing Orders, to say the House stood adjourned, but because it allowed an opportunity for a serious inquiry it had been usual to put the Question from the Chair, but as the hon. Member was using it for a different purpose he declared the House adjourned and left the Chair.

Whereupon, MR. SPEAKER, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 3, adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at twenty minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 17th April, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

Mr. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. James William Lowther, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Deputy-Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Barry Railway Bill [Lords]; Clacton Improvement Bill [Lords]; Commercial Union Assurance Bill [Lords]; Mortgage Insurance Corporation Bill [Lords]; Preston Corporation (Ribble Navigation) Bill [Lords]; Rhymney Railway Bill [Lords]; Truro Water Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS [LORDS] (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).

Mr. Deputy-Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.:—Municipal Corporations (Merthyr Tydfil Scheme Confirmation) Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time to-morrow.

Whitechapel and Bow Railway Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Cordoba and Rosario Railway Bill [Lords]; Entre Rios Railways Bill [Lords]. [Not amended], considered; to be read the third time.

Clyde Navigation Bill [Lords]; Hastings Harbour Bill [Lords]; Hessle Gas Bill [Lords]; Marylebone Chapels Bill [Lords]; Metropolitan Railway Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed.

Mexborough and Swinton Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords]. To be read a second time To-morrow.

West Cumberland Electric Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed.

Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill (by Order). Second Reading deferred till Thursday, 18th May.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill. "To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Birkenhead, Bradford (Yorkshire), Chester, Derby, Leek, Ossett, and Plymouth," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 177.]

Grangemouth Waterworks and Burgh Extension Order Confirmation Bill. "To confirm a Provisional Order, under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Grangemouth Waterworks and Burgh Extension," presented by the Lord-Advocate; read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 3rd May, and to be printed. [Bill 178.]

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

PETITIONS.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Buckpool; Edinburgh; Larkhall; Leith; and Springburn; to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petition from Manchester, in favour: to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRANSVAAL.

Copy presented, of further correspondence relating to Labour in the Transvaal Mines [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BOARD OF TRADE (LABOUR DEPARTMENT).

Copy presented, of Tenth Abstract of Labour Statistics of the United Kingdom, 1902–4 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHTHOUSES, ETC. (LOCAL INSPECTIONS).

Copies presented, of Reports to the Board of Trade by the Trinity House of Deptford Strond, the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses, and the Commissioners of Irish Lights of their inspection of Local Lighthouses, Buoys, and Beacons [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 132.]

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Copy presented, of Regulations for Secondary Schools (from August 1st, 1905, to 31st July, 1906) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BRITISH MUSEUM.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 7th March; *Mr. John Morley*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 133.]

IRISH LAND ACT, 1903.

Copy presented, of Treasury Rules and Regulations, dated 14th April, 1905, under the Irish Land Act, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Report and Papers relating to the Training of Teachers for the year 1903–4 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON CHURCHES (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Report of the Royal Commission on Churches (Scotland), Vol. I., Report [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON CHURCHES (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Report of the Royal Commission on Churches (Scotland), Vol. II., Minutes of Evidence and Appendices [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CHARITY COMMISSION (ENGLAND AND WALES).

Copy presented, of fifty-second Report of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

INEBRIATE REFORMATORIES (REGULATIONS).

Copy presented, of Regulations made with the approval of the Secretary of State for the Home Department for the management and discipline of the certified Inebriate Reformatory at Cattal, near York [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

EAST INDIA (APPEALS).

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 10th April; *Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree*]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3339 to 3341 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EGYPT (No. 1, 1905).

Copy presented, of Reports by His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General on the Finances, Administration, and Condition of Egypt and the Soudan in 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PARISH TRUSTS (SCOTLAND), (No. 1).

Return ordered, "(1) of all and every sum or sums of money, or other funds or properties, heritable or moveable, which have been given, mortified, or bequeathed wholly or mainly for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Parish, or any of them, as such inhabitants, or for any public purpose connected with the Parish, and which have become vested in or are administered by the Parish Council, in the following form—

Parish of County of

Name, description, and purpose of each gift, mortification, or bequest, and by whom made.	Date of the same.	Amount of the same.	Manner in which the same is invested.	Authority by which such investment was made.	Rate of interest obtained from said investment.	State whether interest is in arrear; and, if so, from what date.	Describe title deeds, and state in whose custody they are deposited.	State in what register the deed of constitution and the last title are recorded.	Annual income derived from the Trust during the year.	Amount distributed to beneficiaries during the year 1904.	Number of beneficiaries among whom the Trust was distributed during the year 1904.	Has the Trust been transferred to the Parish Council under Section 30 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894; and, if so, by whom.

And (2) of the Parochial and other Trusts upon which the Parish Council have applied for representation in terms of Section 30 of The Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894:—

Names of Trusts upon which the Parish Council have made application for representation in terms of Section 30 of The Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894.	Person or body to whom application was made.	Has application been granted?	Where application has been refused, state grounds on which such refusal was based.

—(*Mr. Haldane.*)

PARISH TRUSTS (SCOTLAND), (No. 2).

Return ordered, "(1) of all and every sum or sums of money, or other funds or properties, heritable or moveable, which have been given, mortified, or bequeathed wholly or mainly for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Parish, or any of them, as such inhabitants, or for any public purpose connected with the Parish, other than the purposes excepted from the operation of Sub-section (1) of Section 30 of The Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894, and which have become vested in or are administered by the kirk session or heritors and kirk session or minister of the Parish, or the kirk session or deacons' court or managers or vestry of a congregation belonging to any religious denomination, in the following form—

Parish of County of

Name, description, and purpose of each gift, mortification, or bequest, and by whom made.	Date of the same.	Amount of the same.	Manner in which the same is invested.	Authority by which such investment was made.	Rate of interest obtained from said investment.	State whether interest is in arrear; and, if so, from what date.	Describe title deeds and state in whose custody they are deposited.	State in what register the deed of constitution and the last title are recorded.	Number of Trustees.	Number of additional persons (if any) appointed to act along with the Trustees in terms of Section 30 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894, and date of approval of Local Government Board.	Annual income derived from the Trust during the year 1904.	Amount distributed to beneficiaries during the year 1904.	Number of beneficiaries among whom the Trust was distributed during the year 1904.
											£ s. d.	£ s. d.	

And (2) of Trusts which have been transferred by the kirk session or other trustees as aforesaid in terms of Section 30 (1) of The Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894—

Name of Trust.	Date of Transfer.	Has Trust been transferred to Parish Council or to persons appointed by them. In the latter case, give names of such persons.

—(*Mr. Haldane.*)

BURGH TRUSTS (SCOTLAND).

Return ordered, (1) of all and every sum or sums of money, or other funds or properties, heritable or moveable, which have been given, mortified, or bequeathed wholly or mainly for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Burgh, or any of them, as such inhabitants, or for any public purpose connected with the Burgh, and which have become vested in or are administered by the town council, or any member or members thereof, in the following form—

Town Council of County of

Name, description, and purpose of each gift, mortification, or bequest, and by whom made.	Date of the same.	Amount of the same.	Manner in which the same is invested.	Authority by which such investment was made.	Rate of interest obtained from said investment.	State whether interest is in arrear; and, if so, from what date.	Describe title deeds, and state in whose custody they are deposited.	State in what register the deed of constitution and the last title are recorded.	Annual income derived from the Trust during the year 1904.	Amount distributed to beneficiaries during the year 1904.	Number of beneficiaries among whom the Trust was distributed during the year 1904.
									£ s. d.	£ s. d.	

And (2) of Trusts which have been transferred by the Town Council, or members thereof, in terms of Section 30 (1) of The Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894—

Name of Trust.	Date of Transfer.	Has Trust been transferred to Parish Council or to persons appointed by them. In the latter case, give names of such persons.

—(*Mr. Haldane.*)

BY-LAWS IN RURAL DISTRICTS.

Return ordered, "showing, as regards each rural district in England and Wales, the area, population, and number of parishes, whether there are in force any By-laws with respect to new streets and buildings, and, if so, the scope of such By-laws, in the following form—

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Rural District.	Area of District in acres.	Population according to Census of 1901.	Number of parishes in District.	Whether any By-laws with respect to new streets or new buildings are in force.	Where any such By-laws are in force in part only of the District, the names of the parishes in which they are in force.	Whether the By-laws substantially follow the Urban Model Series.	If so, whether they contain any modification as regards the materials to be used in the structure of walls.	Whether the By-laws substantially follow the Rural Model Series.	If in excess of Rural Model, whether they contain any additional provisions as regards the materials to be used in the structure of walls.

—(*Mr. Henry Hobhouse.*)

GAS UNDERTAKINGS (LOCAL AUTHORITIES).

Return ordered, "relating to all authorised Gas Undertakings in the United Kingdom belonging to Local Authorities, for the year ended the 25th day of March, 1905 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 332, of Session 1904)."—(*Mr. Bonar Law.*)

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE (ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, AND IRELAND).

Return ordered, "showing for the year ended the 31st day of March, 1905 (1) the amount contributed by England, Scotland, and Ireland, respectively, to the Revenue collected by Imperial officers; (2) the expenditure on English, Scotch, and Irish services met out of such Revenue; and (3) the balances of Revenue contributed by England, Scotland, and Ireland, respectively, which are available for Imperial expenditure (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 225, of Session 1904.)"—(*Mr. Lough.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Preferential Treatment by United States of Sugar Grown in the Philippine Islands.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether sugar grown in the Philippine Islands enjoys any, and, if so, what preferential treatment on entry into the United States.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) Philippine sugar imported into the United States pays 75 per cent. of the ordinary tariff rates of import duty.

United States Sugar Duties and Bounties.

Mr. LOUGH: To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether cane sugars grown in Porto Rico, the Sandwich Islands, and Louisiana, and beetroot sugar grown in the United States, pay no import or Excise duty, and cane sugar grown in Cuba only pays 80 per cent. of the United States duty; and whether bounties are paid to the growers of beetroot sugar by several of the separate States in the Union; whether refined sugar exported from the United States receives a drawback equivalent to the whole duty, although the sugar may have paid no duty or a reduced duty; and, if this be so, whether the Government are bound by the Brussels Convention to prevent the importation of such bounty-fed sugar into the United Kingdom.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) The Answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative; only one State at present pays a bounty on beet sugar, and only one factory benefits by that bounty; the drawback paid on sugar exported from the United States is 99 per cent. of the import duty paid on the raw sugar, from which it is refined. The last part of the Question does not therefore arise.

British Pilotage Certificates—Eligibility of Foreigners to hold same.

Mr. YERBURGH (Chester): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he is aware that a pilotage certificate was granted by the Board to the master of a Dutch vessel after the Bristol Pilotage Committee had refused to grant him one on the ground of his being a foreigner; and will he say whether the Bristol Pilotage Committee had power to refuse the grant of a pilotage certificate on the above-mentioned ground; and, if so, for what reason was their decision set aside.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) A pilotage certificate was recently granted after examination by the Board of Trade in the circumstances stated in the Question. It is entirely within the discretion of a pilotage authority to decide whether or not they will examine, and, if satisfied, grant a pilotage certificate to the master or mate of any ship applying for a certificate. It is, however, provided by Section 600 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, that, "if it appears to the Board of Trade upon complaint made to them that a pilotage authority have," without reasonable cause, refused to examine a master or mate or to grant such a certificate, the Board may, if the circumstances of the case appear to them to require it, exercise the powers of the pilotage authority in this respect. Having regard to the decision arrived at by a Select Committee of the House of Commons in the year 1888, and subsequently discussed in Parliament, and approved by Section 1 of The Merchant Shipping (Pilotage) Act, 1889, which is incorporated in The Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, the Board are unable to hold that the fact of an applicant being an officer of a foreign ship affords reasonable ground for refusal to examine him or to grant him a certificate.

Government's Fiscal Policy.

Mr. BLACK (Banffshire): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can now state whether the Government's policy is to promote or to oppose the preferential or protective taxation of food.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) I do not think that anything would be gained by attempting to deal with the fiscal controversy by Parliamentary Question and Answer.

Landing of Fish Illegally Trawled in Moray Firth.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Lord-Advocate if he will state whether, in view of the continued evasion of Fishery Board by-laws by British-owned trawlers sailing under a foreign flag, the Secretary for Scotland has yet come to a decision with other Government Departments in regard to the recommendation of the Fishery Board that all ports of the United Kingdom should be closed against the landing of fish caught by trawlers in the Moray Firth.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) The matter referred to by the hon. Member is still under consideration, and I am not yet in a position to make a statement as to the attitude of the Government.

Irish Poor Law and Local Government Officials.

Mr. HAVILAND BURKE (King's County, Tullamore): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Poor Law and other local officers previous to being sanctioned by the Local Government Board have to sign a query sheet promising to conform to certain regulations issued by the Local Government Board, and in existence at the time of appointment, and that these regulations or duties are specified under the headings of the different offices; and will he say whether any officer who complies with the regulations prescribed for his office and discharges the duties accordingly, can be disturbed in his tenure of office by either the local authority under whom he serves or by the Local Government Board; and, if so, to state the Act of Parliament and the section; whether there is any rule laid down in the Local Government Board office for determining the punishments to be meted out to the Poor Law and other local officers for transgression of or dereliction in the discharge of duty; and whether there have ever been any instances in which Poor Law officers have been dismissed by the Local Government Board without their boards of guardians ever having been apprised of bad marks being made against them in the Local Government Board offices; and, if so, will he state the cases and the causes which led to such action.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Poor Law officers are required to sign query sheets with the view of eliciting information as to their history and qualifications. They do not sign any promise to conform to the statutory regulations of the Board, for these they are bound to obey. The Local Government Board can, either upon or without any suggestion or complaint from the guardians, remove any ordinary paid officer whom they may deem unfit for or incompetent to discharge the duties of his office, or who shall refuse to obey or carry out the orders of the Board (1 and 2 Vic., c. 58, s. 33). They can also remove dispensary doctors on sufficient grounds (14 and 15 Vic., c. 68, s. 8). Under Section 86 of the Local Government Act of 1898 any officer who wilfully fails or refuses to perform any duty or do anything required of him by the Act or the Orders of the Local Government Board is liable to a fine not exceeding 40s., or 40s. per day if the offence is a continuing one. There is no such rule as is mentioned, each case being dealt with on its merits. Records of officers' misconduct are kept, but not by means of bad marks. It is not the practice of the Board to dismiss an officer without first communicating with the guardians on the subject of the officer's default.

Irish Education—Rule 127 (b)—Commissioners present when Rule was passed.

MR. P. A. McHUGH (Leitrim, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland on what date did the National Education Board for Ireland finally approve of, and adopt, Rule 127 (b); who were the Commissioners present at the meeting at which the rule was adopted; were there any vacancies on the Board at the time the rule was adopted; and, if so, can he say whether these vacancies have since been filled up; and can he give the names of the newly-appointed Commissioners.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The regulation now embodied in Rule 127 (b) was passed unanimously at a meeting of the Board on the 25th October, 1904, at which the following Commissioners were present—

Sir Henry Bellingham, Bart., D.L.

Right Hon. Christopher Palles, Lord Chief Baron.

Rev. Henry Evans, D.D.

Sir Rowland Blennerhassett, Bart., D.L.

His Honour Judge Shaw.

Rev. Hamilton B. Wilson, D.D.

Stanley Harrington, Esq., J.P.

William R. J. Molloy, Esq., J.P.

Right Rev. Mervyn Archdall, D.D., Bishop of Killaloe.

Right Hon. Mr. Justice Gibson.

Anthony Traill, Esq., LL.D., M.D., D.L., Provost of Trinity College.

Right Hon. Lord Frederick FitzGerald.

Rev. D. A. Taylor, M.A., D.D.

W. J. M. Starkie, Esq., M.A., Litt.D., Resident Commissioner.

There were three Commissioners absent and there were three vacancies on the Board.

The new Code, including Rule 127 (b), was approved at a meeting of the Board on the 20th December, 1904. The following Commissioners were present—

Sir Henry Bellingham, Bart., D.L.

Right Hon. Christopher Palles, Lord Chief Baron.

Sir Rowland Blennerhassett, Bart., LL.D., D.L.

His Honour Judge Shaw.

Rev. Hamilton B. Wilson, D.D.

William R. J. Molloy, Esq., J.P.

Right Rev. Mervyn Archdall, D.D., Bishop of Killaloe.

Anthony Traill, Esq., LL.D., M.D., D.L., Provost of Trinity College.

Right Hon. Lord Frederick FitzGerald.

His Honour Judge Carton.

Rev. D. A. Taylor, M.A., D.D.

Right Hon. Lord Killanin.

W. J. M. Starkie, Esq., M.A., Litt.D., Resident Commissioner.

Four Commissioners were absent and there were three vacancies on the Board.

The following are the names of the newly-appointed Commissioners—

The Most Rev. Patrick Foley, D.D., Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin.

Edward John Gwynn, Esq., M.A., F.T.C.D.

Gerald Dease, Esq., D.L.

Facilities at Park Drain Station (Great Northern and Great Eastern Joint Railway).

MR. SEYMOUR ORMSBY-GORE (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade if he will bring his influence to bear upon the directors of the North Eastern and Great Northern Railways with a view to their giving a station master and facilities sufficient for the requirements of the district at the station of Park Drain on their joint line between Doncaster and Lincoln.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) The Board of Trade have communicated with the Great Northern and Great Eastern Joint Committee on whose line Park Drain Station is situated, and the Committee have informed the Board that a very small amount of traffic is dealt with at this station, and that it is not considered that any increase in the expense of working the station would be justified. It is added that the station is managed by a responsible foreman who is under the control of the neighbouring station master at Haxey.

Bristol Art Union—Picture Lottery.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): To ask the Secretary of the Board of Trade whether, having regard to the Act for legalising art unions, the Board of Trade has sanctioned the combination of the schemes for the furtherance of fine arts and for the benefit of the infirmary in Bristol; whether he is aware that the scheme includes the redemption of the prize pictures at their money value by the principal promoter of the scheme, and that an office has been opened in Bristol for the sale of tickets for this scheme without the passing of a special Act of Parliament; and, if so, having regard to 4 Geo. 4, c. 60, s. 41, what action does he propose taking in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) The Board of Trade have sanctioned certain alterations in the rules of the Bristol Art Union to enable the drawing this year to be held in connection with the Royal Infirmary Carnival. These alterations do not cover the proposal which has been made by a gentleman who is not, the Board understand, a member of the Art Union Committee for the redemption of the prize pictures. The Board have pointed out to the Committee, who are responsible for the drawings, that they have not sanctioned the proposal in question, and they now learn that it has been withdrawn.

Medical Officer of Health for Ross and Cromarty and Inverness-shire.

Mr. WEIR: To ask the Lord-Advocate, in view of the extent of the area of the mainland of the combined counties of Ross and Cromarty and Inverness-shire, will he state whether the proposal to appoint one medical officer of health for the mainland of these counties has received the sanction of the Local Government Board for Scotland.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) The Local Government Board do not favour the proposal, and have not therefore sanctioned the scheme.

Scottish Church Dispute.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): To ask the Lord-Advocate how many churches heretofore in the occupation of the United Free Church have been claimed and taken possession of by the legal Free Church; and how many notices of ejectment from their manses have been served on ministers of the United Free Church since the judgment given by the House of Lords, specifying the numbers of churches and manses separately for each county.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) The Lord-Advocate must refer the hon. Member to the law agents of the two Churches concerned for the information he desires.

Coaling and Revictualling Facilities Afforded to Russian and Spanish Fleets when Passing through Suez Canal.

Mr. WEIR: To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will state on what grounds the facilities for coaling and revictualling afforded to the Russian fleet during its recent passage through the Suez Canal were withheld from the Spanish fleet under similar circumstances in 1898.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) The circumstances of the two cases were entirely different. In the recent case of the Russian Squadron, coal was allowed because the vessels were entitled, under Rule 3 of the Canal Regulations now in force, to an amount sufficient to take them to the nearest port where they could obtain the supplies necessary for the continuation of their voyage, and the amount which they had on board was not sufficient. In 1898 Admiral Camara might have claimed, under the general principles of international law, coal sufficient to enable him to reach the nearest Spanish port, or some nearer neutral destination, but for the fact that the Spanish warships had already enough for that purpose, and further supplies were therefore refused on that ground.

European Officers Employed with Macedonian Gendarmerie.

Mr. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will state the numbers and ranks of the European officers employed with the *gendarmerie* in the Macedonian provinces of Turkey, showing the places at which their headquarters are situated, and their nationality.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) In addition to General de Giorgis, the Italian General Officer appointed to supervise the reorganisation of the Macedonian *gendarmerie*, and the six Adjoints (nominated by Great Britain, Italy, Russia, Austria, France, and Germany respectively), none of whom are below the rank of colonel, there are forty-eight European officers employed with the Macedonian *gendarmerie*. This number is made up as follows: Great Britain, six; France, ten; Russia, eleven; Austria, eleven; Italy, ten. The six British officers, comprising two majors, one captain, and three lieutenants, who hold rank in the Turkish service of one lieutenant-colonel, two majors, and three captains, are employed in the Drama Sandjak, with their headquarters at Drama, Cavalla, and Dövlen. The ten French officers are employed in the Serres district, with their headquarters at Serres. The eleven Russian officers in the Salonica district have their headquarters at Salonica. The eleven Austrian officers in Uscub have their head quarters at Uscub, and the ten Italian officers in the Monastir Sandjak have their headquarters at Monastir, Ochrida, and Perlépé. The ranks of the foreign officers are not known.

Dundrum Asylum—Dismissal of Shoemaker Keogh.

Mr. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether one of the charges which led up to the dismissal of the late shoemaker, Keogh, from the Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum was that a sufficiency of work was not performed by him; whether he could give a Return of this man's work for the three years previous to his dismissal; and also the number of shoemakers who have been appointed to the vacancy since Keogh's discharge, together with their length of service.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The reply to the first inquiry is in the negative. There would, therefore, be no object in giving the Return asked for. Three shoemakers have been appointed since Keogh's discharge; of these, two failed to take up duty, and the third, who was appointed on 1st October, 1903, still holds the post.

Dublin Postal District—Pay and Office Expenditure of Sub-Postmasters.

Mr. NANNETTI: To ask the Postmaster-General the number of town sub-offices in the Dublin postal district; the gross amount paid last year to the sub-postmasters in charge of these offices; the gross amount paid last year by said sub-postmasters out of their salaries to the postal and telegraph clerks engaged in duty at these offices; the gross amount paid last year by said sub-postmasters for office rent, stationery, twine, and other requisites absolutely necessary for the transaction of the duties of the offices under their control; and the average salary of sub-postmasters in the Dublin district after cost of assistants, rent of offices, and other necessary expenses have been deducted.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) There are sixty-eight town sub-offices in Dublin where the sub-postmasters out of their salaries and commissions provide the staff, accommodation, stationery, etc., necessary for the transaction of post office business. The gross amount paid last year to these sub-postmasters was £5,734, but I am unable to say how much of that was disbursed in staff, rent, and other expenses. As the hon. Member is no doubt aware, these sub-postmasters also carry on a private business, in which the post office assistants in many cases take part.

Postal Facilities in the Templetown Division.

Mr. FFRENCH (Wexford, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he has received a petition from the inhabitants of the electoral division of Templetown asking for a post office; and, as there are 1,000 inhabitants in that division and an area of 5,220 acres, will he inquire into the matter with a view to giving better postal facilities to the people of Templetown.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) An application was received last year from the residents of Templetown for a post office at that place, but it was found that, owing to the high cost of the existing service, the accommodation could not be afforded unless the residents were themselves prepared to bear the expense incurred. I will ascertain whether the circumstances are now more favourable, and will acquaint the hon. Member with the result of the inquiry.

Postal Facilities in Rosslare and Kilrane.

MR. FFRENCH: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the want of postal facilities in Rosslare and Kilrane is causing dissatisfaction owing to the fact that letters are delayed in Wexford for twenty hours; and will he inquire why they are not despatched to Rosslare by train in winter as well as summer.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I received an application a short time ago for a second post to Rosslare and Kilrane during the winter months. As, however, it appeared that the cost of the existing service was very high in comparison with the revenue from the correspondence, I was not justified in providing additional accommodation at the cost of the Post Office, but I offered to arrange for the desired service if the residents were prepared to bear the cost. I regret that I am unable to meet the hon. Member's wishes except on those conditions.

Maximum Salary of London Telegraphists.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that for a number of years the Civil Service Commissioners issued notices offering to candidates for the position of telegraphists in London a prospect of a salary of £190 per annum, and that at the present time in London no telegraphist who received the papers holding out this attraction is in receipt of the salary of £190 per annum; and whether he will state what prospect exists for the bulk of the men realising this salary, in view of his decision to place a barrier between the £160 and £190 scales of pay

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I am aware of the facts of the case to which the hon. Member refers. The telegraphists in the Central Telegraph Office have quite as good a prospect of attaining a salary of £190 a year as during the period when the notices were issued. As the hon. Member is no doubt aware, the scale of pay of the class of overseers and senior telegraphists has recently been raised, and I am considering the question of increasing the number of that class. With these improvements the prospects of the telegraphists will be much better than they were during the period referred to.

Delivery of Letters at Langley Mill.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that many of the inhabitants of Langley Mill wish to have their letters delivered at the back doors of their houses, as has been the custom for many years; whether recently the custom was broken, but that, after an inquiry was made into the matter, the letters were ordered to be delivered at the back doors when so desired; and whether, seeing that recently the letters have again been tendered at the front doors, and in some cases, when refused there, taken away by the postman, he will order the letters to be delivered in the manner most convenient to the public in this locality.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I have no information as to the circumstances referred to by the hon. Member. The matter appears to be one which should be dealt with by the postmaster of Nottingham.

Promotion of Senior Postman to Position of Overseer in East Central Section.

MR. NANNETTI: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that, in the East Central section of the London postal service, a senior postman and lobby officer, in receipt of 44s. per week, has been promoted to the position of overseer at a salary of £170 per annum; and that sorters in receipt of £160 per annum, who are senior in service to this officer and who have been performing overseers' duties for various periods during the last two or three years to the satisfaction of their superior officers, have been passed over; and, if so, whether he will consider, in the interests of economy, the advisability of filling all overseers' vacancies in future from the sorters' class.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I am aware that a senior postman and lobby officer with wages of 44s. per week has recently been promoted to the position of overseer. No questions of passing over officers on the sorters' class, however, arose, as the appointment in question was one for which senior postmen and lobby officers only were eligible. The practice of filling a fixed proportion of vacancies on the class of overseers from the postmen's force has obtained for many years past, and I am not prepared to direct that all overseerships shall in future be filled solely from the sorters' class.

Case of Telegraphist Booth.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that a telegraphist named Booth at the Central Telegraph Office, London, applied to be transferred to the Sorting Department by reason of the fact that he suffered from telegraphic cramp in his wrist, and was unable to perform manipulative duties; that the chief medical officer stated that Booth was physically competent to perform the duties in the Sorting Department; and that Booth is to be dismissed the service; and, if so, whether, in view of the fact that he could be employed in another department, he will consider the matter with a view towards retaining the services of this officer.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The case is now under consideration, and I hope soon to be able to give a decision.

Naval Training for Cadets at Bermuda.

SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state whether it is under consideration to use Bermuda as a place for continuing the studies and training on shore of naval cadets; and, if so, whether full information will be given to Parliament explanatory of the proposal before any final step is taken or arrangements made to carry it out.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) There is no intention to establish a training school for cadets at Bermuda. Owing to the approaching occupation of Dartmouth College by the cadets from Osborne, it has been decided to embark the remaining "Britannia" cadets on two training cruisers, which will winter at Bermuda. One term will be on board for three months and one for six months.

Experiments on Dogs—Case of Mr. F. O. Parsons, of Crouch End.

DR. SHIPMAN (Northampton): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the report of a recent case in the Clerkenwell County Court in which it was stated that a Mr. F. O. Parsons, a veterinary surgeon of Crouch End, performed certain experiments on dogs; and whether, seeing that Mr. Parsons does not hold a licence under The Cruelty to Animals Act, 1876, it is intended to take proceedings against him.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) As vaccination is, I am informed, a common method of treating dogs as a prophylactic against distemper, it is not clear to me, on the information I at present possess, whether what took place in this instance constituted an "experiment" or not. I am making inquiries in order to ascertain whether such was the case.

Irish Estates Commissioners—Interpretation of Section 10 of the Land Act, 1903.

MR. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): To ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he is aware that the Estates Commissioners in some instances interpret the words "an estate mainly agricultural," in Section 10 of the Land Act of 1903, as meaning an estate consisting of holdings mainly agricultural or pastoral; whether, in determining whether a large estate containing a small town is mainly agricultural and pastoral and an estate within the meaning of the Act, it is the duty of the Estates Commissioners to ascertain first to what extent the householders of such a town are engaged in agricultural pursuits, the nature of their house property, and the relation of the price of such a town to the price of the whole estate; and whether the Estates Commissioners have had before them the proposal to purchase the entire interest of Mrs. Grace Pakenham Mahon in her whole estates in the county Roscommon, including the small town of Strokestown.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) I am not aware that the Estates Commissioners put any such interpretation on the 10th Section. I must decline to answer the second query as to the proper interpretation of the section, which is a matter for the determination of the Estates Commissioners, instructed by, and subject to the review of, Mr. Justice Meredith.

Irish National Board of Education Inspectors.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will give the names of inspectors employed by the National Board in Ireland, their salaries, previous experience of school work, and number of years each taught in a national school.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The names and University degrees of the inspectors are set out in Thom's Official Directory, and the scale of salaries will be found in the Estimates. These gentlemen are appointed as the result of competitive examination conducted by the Civil Service Commissioners. Experience in national or other schools is not a necessary qualification for the appointment, and I am not prepared to make inquiries in this respect.

Sale of Estates in County Kerry under the Irish Land Act, 1903.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the name and number of estates sold in the county of Kerry since the passing of The Land Act, 1903, the total rental of each estate, and the number of tenants on each estate.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The number of estates sold is thirty-eight, comprising 1,672 holdings, 1,635 of which were tenanted with a gross rental of £24,010. It is not feasible to set out the details asked for with regard to each separate estate.

Loughrea, Kilchreest, and Athenry Police Force.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the number of policemen at present stationed in Loughrea, Kilchreest, and Athenry; and how many extra policemen have been drafted into these districts within the course of the past month.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The number of police at present stationed in Loughrea is twenty-four; in Kilchreest, fourteen; and in Athenry, thirty-two. The number of extra police drafted into these stations within the past month are: Loughrea, six; Kilchreest, nine; and Athenry, sixteen.

Irish Manual Instructors and Science Teachers.

SIR JAMES HASLETT (Belfast, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, on the introduction of the new system of manual instruction and science teaching in the national schools of Ireland, it was found necessary to secure the services of skilled and trained teachers to act as organisers of the new system, and to obtain the services of a number of the best teachers from large national schools in Ireland; and that these teachers are being dismissed from their new posts, and practically from the service of the State; and, if so, will he reconsider the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) These organisers were employed for a definite term which expired on the 31st March. The Commissioners, however, are providing them with situations as teachers in model schools and other national schools upon the most favourable terms possible.

Edgeworthstown Loan Fund Society Frauds.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a number of investors in the

Edgeworthstown Loan Fund Society lost their savings owing to the defalcation of a clerk; that most of these people were induced to put their money into this society by the representations made to them that this society was under the supervision of the Loan Fund Board of Dublin Castle; and that during the period that these defalcations were going on the books of the society were supposed to be audited by the Dublin Castle Loan Fund Board's inspector; and whether, seeing that the losses of these people were in part due to the ineffective control exercised by the central board, clauses will be introduced into the new Charitable Loan Fund Bill empowering the Loan Fund Board to make some grants towards the relief of the distress caused by this collapse.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) This loan fund society was under the supervision of the Loan Fund Board, but I am informed by the Board that the limitations of that supervision did not enable the inspector when auditing the books to detect the frauds in question, which were of such a kind as to lead to no discovery or suspicion on the part of the local trustees and managers. I am not aware that representations were made as alleged, but, if it was suggested that the Loan Fund Board is a Department of the Irish Government, the suggestion was entirely erroneous and misleading. The Board is not a Government Department, nor is the Irish Executive responsible for it. The Board have no funds for the purpose mentioned in the last inquiry, and no such clause as suggested, which would be quite ineffectual will be introduced in the Bill.

Lectures on Bee-Keeping in Ireland.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether bee-keeping is taught by the Department of Agriculture in Ireland; and whether, in case lectures on this subject are given, there would be a possibility of sending a lecturer to Longford before the summer season comes on.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Lecturers on bee-keeping are appointed by county committees under the Department's schemes. In most counties instruction in bee-keeping is given by the county horticultural instructor. The Longford Committee have not yet adopted a horticultural scheme.

Agricultural and Veterinary Instruction in Longford.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, with a view to encouraging scientific training of agriculturists in county Longford and the employment of a permanent agricultural and veterinary instructor, the Department of Agriculture would increase their present contribution to the Agricultural County Committee of county Longford.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Department are prepared to increase their contribution to county Longford by paying the salary of an agricultural instructor when a qualified person is available for the position. There is no suitable person to be had at present; but the Department have a number of young men in training at the Royal College of Science with a view to their qualifying for appointments of this nature.

Wearing of Shamrock by Police at Lurgan on St. Patrick's Day.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on St. Patrick's Day last, at 9 a.m., the police force paraded to do duty under District Inspectors Stoddart, M'Mahon, and Redington at Lurgan were ordered to remove the sprigs of shamrock from their helmets lest offence would be given to the Orangemen of the town when they saw them wearing them; that a young constable, who in his temporary absence from the ranks had not heard the order, was ordered to remove the sprig of shamrock from his helmet, and can he say whether there is anything in the police code requiring this to be done; and whether he is aware that the Irish Guards at Wellington Barracks were presented with bunches of shamrock on the same day by Lord Roberts.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) No such order was given to the police paraded for duty on this occasion, but one of the district inspectors advised a constable who was wearing a large bunch of shamrock on his helmet that it would be more prudent to remove it until he returned from duty. The remaining constables were not wearing shamrock. There is no regulation in the Code forbidding the police to wear shamrock.

Purchase of Estates in Kerry by the Congested Districts Board.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the number of estates purchased by the Congested Districts Board in Kerry, the prices paid, and the additional sums spent in improving houses and land.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Board have arranged for the purchase of six estates for a total purchase-money of £54,993. No expenditure on improvements has yet been made.

Rae Estate—Maurice Sheehan's Farm at Farnis.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Maurice Sheehan, of Farnis, on the Rae Estate, Keil, county Kerry, signed a notice in 1900 with the consent of the receiver Mr. Huggard; and whether, seeing that nothing has been done since to have the farm valued and the rent revised, steps will be taken at once to have the farm valued.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Commissioners have no record that proceedings to have a fair rent fixed in this case have been initiated before them in or since the year named.

Irish Geological Survey.

Mr. NANNETTI: To ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether the Irish Geological Survey, hitherto managed from this country, has been transferred to the Board of Agriculture in Ireland; and, if so, whether that portion of the Ordnance Survey at present engaged in the survey in Ireland could not also be transferred to the Board of Agriculture in Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.*) The Answer to the first of the inquiries is in the affirmative. No change is contemplated in the existing arrangements for the conduct of the Ordnance Survey, which could not be split up in the manner proposed without additional expense and considerable loss of efficiency.

Transvaal Constitution—Women's Franchise.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in the proposed Constitution to the Transvaal, the rights of women to vote or share in the government of the Colony have been in any way recognised.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) I must ask the hon. Member to wait for the publication of the Letters Patent in about a week's time.

Private J. Woods, 19th Regiment.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether his attention has been called to the case of Private James Woods, who joined the second battalion 19th Regiment in 1863, and served therein for ten years and eighty-eight days, five years of which were in Burmah, in which he saw active service, who then spent nine years in the Reserve, and afterwards fifteen years in the Militia; and whether, in view of this man's conduct in all these services, and of the fact that he has been discharged without pension, and of his age and circumstances, he will cause some small pension to be granted to him.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) This man was discharged from the second battalion 19th Foot on the 23rd May, 1868, after ten years three months service, on completion of his term of limited engagement. There is no record of his having taken part in any active operations while serving in Burmah, and he was not awarded a war medal. His subsequent service in the Reserve and in the Militia gives him no claim to pension. Several applications for pension have been made by the man to the Commissioners of Chelsea Hospital, who have informed him, in reply, that his services do not render him eligible for any pension. His age and present circumstances give him no claim to special consideration.

Army Reform—Territorial Regiments and Militia—Recruits.

DR. THOMPSON (Monaghan, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for War if, when the territorial regiments are formed, he intends to continue the Militia; and, if so, how he proposes to find recruits for a long-service Army, a short-service Army, and the Militia.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The reply to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative. With regard to the second part there is no intention of changing the present system of obtaining recruits. The proposals made do not involve any addition to the number of recruits required.

Army Reform—Territorial and Long-Service Regiments.

DR. THOMPSON: To ask the Secretary of State for War if it is his intention, in his new scheme of Army reform, to separate the long-service regiments from their territorial connections and restore their old numbers; and, if not, will he explain how he intends to supply both the new territorial regiments and the long-service Army with recruits.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) One of the main objects of the new Army scheme is to strengthen the territorial connections of the regiments, and there is no present intention of restoring the old numbers. The present system of obtaining recruits will be maintained.

Alterations and Repairs to Barracks and Fortifications.

SIR LEWIS MCIVER (Edinburgh, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether it has been decided to abolish the triennial contract system of executing alterations and repairs to barracks and fortifications; and whether instructions have been issued in the Southern Command to employ labour at once by way of experiment, with a view to the War Department eventually adopting a system of carrying out the repairs by means of labour employed directly.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) It has not been decided to abolish the system of triennial contracts for repairs altogether, but it is the intention, in those cases in which the work can be done satisfactorily and efficiently, to replace the present triennial contract system by the employment of day labour. It is understood that this plan has been adopted by the Admiralty with success. Instructions have been issued to the various General Officers Commanding requesting them to inquire and report whether the conditions of the various divisions of their commands are suitable for the adoption of the new method.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

New Battleships.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty at what date were the battleships and cruisers of the 1904–5 programme laid down, and where; what interval of time elapsed between the date of the announcement of the 1904–5 programme to Parliament and the laying down of the two battleships; in the case of the new programme does the Admiralty propose to carry out the statement of the then Financial Secretary to the Admiralty, 3rd July, 1903, that it was their intention to return to the system under which the laying down of vessels proposed in any year shall follow closely upon Parliamentary sanction being received.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge): Tenders for building the two battleships of the 1904–5 programme were accepted as follows—"Lord Nelson," Palmer's Shipbuilding Yard; "Agamemnon," Beardmore's, Glasgow, both in November last. Both firms have made good progress with the preliminary work, but the keels are not yet laid on the blocks. Of the three cruisers, the "Minotaur" was laid down in Devonport Dockyard on the 2nd January, 1905, the "Shannon" at Chatham Dockyard on the same date, and the "Defence" at Pembroke Dockyard on the 22nd

February. The earlier commencement of ships included in the annual programme is a policy desirable in itself, but must always be subject to modification having regard to the circumstances of the year. I may add that what is technically known as "laying down" is not a governing factor in reference to the time of building. An immense amount of preparation and collection of material has to precede the construction of a ship, and the laying of the keel may actually take place at any time during this period without affecting the date of completion.

Training of Volunteer Officers.

MR. CHARLES ALLEN (Gloucestershire, Stroud): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, under his new scheme, he intends to give additional facilities for the training of Volunteer officers.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): As explained in the Memorandum on Estimates, it is proposed to make grants of increased allowances to enable Volunteer corps to carry out field training.

MR. CHARLES ALLEN: Do I understand that no special arrangement is made for the officers?

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Not at present, but that is part of the training of the officers.

Volunteers and the Infantry Drill Book.

MR. CHARLES ALLEN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the amount of matter contained in the infantry drill book which Volunteers can hardly be expected to study, he will take into consideration the advisability of issuing a book giving plainly the minimum which Volunteers ought to learn.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The principles and instructions contained in the new edition of "Infantry Training," issued in March, 1905, are as much applicable to the Volunteers as to the Regulars, and it is considered essential that the Volunteers should study practically the whole of the matter contained therein. In carrying out their training Volunteers are not, however, expected to adhere to the course laid down for the Regulars, and they are directed in paragraph 179 to follow the spirit rather than the letter of the instructions for this course. It is not considered necessary to issue a separate manual for the Volunteers.

Expenditure on Military Works.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, seeing that as the officers of the Comptroller-General were unable to check the revised figures in respect of Head II., Barracks, and Head III., Rifle Ranges, under the Military Works Acts, that official called for a statement showing how such amounts had been arrived at, but awaits a reply from the War Office, when will the reply of the War Office be sent to the Comptroller-General.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT, Cheshire, Macclesfield): The statement referred to was asked for by the Comptroller and Auditor-General on 21st January and was furnished to him on the 7th February.

MR. LAMBERT: But the Comptroller and Auditor-General states in his Report that he still awaits a reply!

*MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: The Report was sent in before the 7th February.

War Office Purchase of Land in Ireland.

MR. LAMBERT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can supply any explanation of a transaction mentioned in the Comptroller-General's Report that for land compulsorily acquired in Ireland the owner claimed £8,000, was awarded £2,040, while on behalf of the War Office the fair and reasonable value was placed at £30.

*MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: Will the hon. Member kindly refer to the reply given to a similar Question put by the hon. Member for South Donegal on Monday, April 3rd.†

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxliv., 123.

The War Office and the Connelmore Brickfields Expenditure.

MR. LAMBERT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what was the date of the request of the Comptroller-General to be made acquainted with the steps taken by the Commanding Royal Engineer to satisfy himself of the correctness of the expenditure charged by the manager of the Connelmore brickfields; and when the reply will be sent.

*MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: The request of the Auditor-General was dated 5th October, 1904, and the reply was sent on the 20th February, 1905. It was thought desirable to have the system inquired into on the spot by a War Office representative, and the question of the accounting in such cases considered generally before replying to the Auditor-General. The Auditor-General has asked for further particulars and a letter was accordingly sent to the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief in Ireland on the 5th April, to which a reply is awaited.

Longford Garrison—Precautions against Fever.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the refusal of the local authorities in Longford to allow any cases of fever which may occur amongst the troops quartered in Longford to be treated in the fever hospital which is under the control of the Poor Law guardians; and will he say what steps he proposes to take to cope with an outbreak of fever amongst the military stationed at Longford.

*MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: My attention has been drawn to the situation at Longford and the whole question is receiving careful consideration. Should a case of fever arise arrangements would have to be made for its segregation in barracks. I am glad to be able to add that very few cases of infectious disease occur at Longford, and none at all have occurred since a case of scarlet fever in 1903. The advisability of retaining troops in localities where ordinary facilities are withheld by the local authorities is necessarily engaging the attention of the Army Council.

Contractors to the Tipperary Barracks and the Fair Wages Resolution.

MR. CULLINAN (Tipperary, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that contractors to the Tipperary military barracks do not comply with the Fair Wages Resolution; and if he will have steps taken to secure that future contracts be given only to those who will do so.

*MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: All contractors holding Government contracts are bound by the terms of the Fair Wages Resolution, and if the hon. Member will direct my attention to any alleged infringement of that Resolution, I will cause immediate inquiry to be made.

South Africa—Coolie Riot at the Jumpers Deep Mine.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state what was the cause of the riot on 9th April at the Jumpers Deep Mine in the Transvaal; how many Chinese coolies were concerned in it; how many were arrested; and, if their trial has already taken place, what sentences were inflicted.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): I have received the following statement as to this outbreak from the officer administering the Government:—"Cause of outbreak at Jumpers Deep was that leave of absence had been temporarily restricted owing to recent contraventions by coolies of Section 19 of the Labour Ordinance. About 400 coolies broke out of bounds and were intercepted by police about two miles from compound. Police turned coolies back to compound. Certain number got on railway line and threw stones without effect. Twenty-nine were arrested and are being charged with riot and assault, but trial has not yet taken place. Coolies were only absent from compound for one and half hours. Whole incident unimportant."

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: Will the right hon. Gentleman say what is the effect of Section 19 of the Labour Ordinance?

Mr. LYTTELTON: It is the section which prohibits the coolies from leaving the compound without permission.

Chinese Consul for the Transvaal.

Mr. CHARLES ALLEN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether a Chinese Consul has been appointed in the Transvaal; if so, what is his name and where does he reside; and, if not, who is looking after the interests of the Chinese coolies at present.

Mr. LYTTELTON: A Chinese Consul has been appointed. His name is Liu Yu-Lin. He will reside at Johannesburg. The interests of the Chinese coolies are and will continue to be looked after by the Superintendent of Foreign Labour and his staff as well as by the Chinese Consul when he arrives.

Mr. CHARLES ALLEN: When will this gentleman arrive in South Africa?

Mr. LYTTELTON: I cannot say.

Income-Tax on British Investments Abroad.

Sir GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he can state separately the amount of British capital invested abroad in foreign countries and in the Colonies; and what amount of interest paid upon this capital is brought under review for purposes of the income-tax.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.): I cannot add anything to the information given in Table 185, page 201, and Table 216, page 215, of the Inland Revenue Board's Annual Report, 1904 (Cd. 2228).

Signatures to Consols Dividend Warrants.

*Mr. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that the Bank of England will not accept a Consols dividend warrant signed by power of attorney, and that, consequently, a payee who is incapacitated from signing his or her name is deprived of all sums accruing; and whether he is prepared to take steps for the removal of this difficulty.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: A Consol dividend warrant can be discharged only by the person in whose favour it is drawn. If he be physically incapacitated from signing his name, he can discharge the warrant by mark, which must be attested in the usual manner. If, however, a stockholder has granted a power of attorney to some person to receive his dividends and give a discharge therefor, and lodges the power of attorney with the Bank, a dividend warrant is prepared in favour of the attorney and can be discharged by him.

*Mr. REGINALD LUCAS: As I am at present in the position of being able to obtain payment of dividends under such circumstances I shall be glad if the right hon. Gentleman will make further inquiries.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will communicate with me privately.

Royal Commission on Trade Disputes.

Mr. PEMBERTON (Sunderland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Report of the Royal Commission on Trade Disputes will be ready by the end of the Easter Recess.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's): No, Sir; I have communicated with the Secretary to the Royal Commission, and he cannot give me a definite date.

Rural Postmen's Grievances.

Mr. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that rural postmen formerly employed on mounted rural posts have suffered losses through being compelled to dispose of their horses and carts, owing to their rounds being converted into cycle posts for the convenience of the Department; and whether he will take steps to compensate these men for their losses.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): Such cases as those to which the hon. Member refers occur sometimes. In each full consideration is given to all the circumstances and a special grant is made of such an amount as the equity of the particular case seems to require. If the hon. Member has in mind any instance of the kind which he would like to bring specially to my notice, I shall be pleased to consider it on hearing from him.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: I may tell the noble Lord I have several instances in which applications have been made for compensation and no satisfaction has been received.

LORD STANLEY: If the hon. Member will send them to me, I shall be happy to inquire into the circumstances.

Pay of Provincial Linemen.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, in accordance with the undertaking given by his predecessor to consider the claims of the smaller classes in the postal service to improved scales of pay, he has considered the claims of linemen in the provinces, and whether the maximum pay of the general body has been reduced from 40s. to 38s. per week, as from November last; and, if so, what are the reasons for this reduction of pay.

LORD STANLEY: There has been no reduction of pay for linemen now in the service. But in order to afford adequate remuneration for certain superior duties I have recently introduced a class of senior linemen on scale 39s., 1s. 6d. to 45s. a week. This rendered it necessary to reduce the maximum of the class below, for new entrants, from 40s. to 38s. a week.

Lerwick Mails.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he will state the terms of the mail contract between the North of Scotland Steamship Company and the Post Office with reference to delivery of mails at Lerwick, and the dates of departure of mails from Aberdeen and arrival at Lerwick during the last three months.

LORD STANLEY: I have sent the hon. Member a copy of the mail contract to which he refers, and also a statement showing the dates of the mails from Aberdeen to Lerwick during the last three months.

Underfed School Children.

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can now state what instructions have been given to local boards of guardians in reference to the right of starving and destitute children in public elementary schools to immediate relief.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): I am preparing a circular to boards of guardians on this subject, which I propose to issue as soon as possible.

SIR JOHN GORST: Will the circular be laid on the Table of the House.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I see no objection to that.

Average rate levied by Metropolitan Borough Councils and London County Council.

MR. BENN (Devonport): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board how the increase in the average rate in the pound levied by the Metropolitan boroughs compares with the increase in the average rate, exclusive of education, levied by the London County Council.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Taking the three years ended March, 1904, the increase in the average rate levied by the Metropolitan borough councils for their own purposes was one penny. In the case of the London County Council the increase was 1½d. No sum was raised by the County Council for education purposes.

Increase of Metropolitan Borough Rates.

MR. BENN: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board what is the amount of the increase in the average rate in the pound levied by the Metropolitan boroughs during the four complete years of their existence as compared with the average rate levied by their predecessors, the vestries and district boards, during the like preceding period.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The Returns received by the Local Government Board do not enable me to include the year 1904–5 in the period in respect of which the information asked for is desired. The average rate in the pound of the Metropolitan borough councils in the three years ended March, 1904, was 1s. 10·6d., and the average rate of the Metropolitan vestries and district boards and the Woolwich Local Board of Health for the three years ended March, 1900, was 1s. 7·1d. The increase, therefore, was 3·5d. For the purpose of the comparison I have taken the rates raised by the vestries and district boards as including those required for the expenditure of burial boards, commissioners of baths and washhouses, and of public libraries and museums, whose powers have now been transferred to the borough councils.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.): May I ask whether it is not the fact that, during the same period, the assessment in many cases has been enormously increased—that the same property is now assessed at a much higher rate than it was—and that, therefore, the absolute rate in the pound is somewhat misleading.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I think that is probable.

Continental Import Duties and Drawbacks on Sugar and Sugared Goods.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he is willing to furnish a Return of the import duties imposed upon sugar, and upon confectionery, jams, biscuits, cakes, and other sugared goods in Germany, Austria, Hungary, Belgium, Holland, and France; and also a Return of the drawbacks granted in these countries upon all these commodities except sugar itself.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BONAR LAW, Glasgow, Blackfriars): If the hon. Member will move for a Return the Board of Trade will be happy to grant it.

London Education Rate.

MR. BENN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education if he will state the amount of the additional rate incurred to date in the administration of the London Education Act, 1903; and whether he can at present give any estimate of the total addition to the rates which that measure involves to the Metropolis.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University): I am afraid I have no official information on the subject.

MR. BENN: Does not the hon. Gentleman's Department publish particulars of the cost of education? If not, to whom am I to go for the information?

SIR WILLIAM ANSON: The question of rates is not one which concerns my Department.

Defaulting Education Authorities in Merionethshire.

MR. OSMOND WILLIAMS (Merionethshire): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether the Education (Defaulting Authorities) Act, 1904, has been put in operation in the county of Merioneth; and, if so, in respect of what schools; and on what grounds.

SIR WILLIAM ANSON: The Board of Education have made payments to the managers of the following three schools in Merioneth: Llawr-y-Bettws Church School, Maentwrog National School, and Tynant National School. These payments have been made in respect of expenses which, in the opinion of the Board, had been properly incurred by the managers of these schools for the purpose of maintaining and keeping them efficient between September 30th, 1903, and October 31st, 1904, and for which provision should have been made by the local education authority.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs): Has any deduction been made in respect of this amount out of the grant payable to the county? Are these the only schools in arrears, or, if not, have any preliminary steps been taken in regard to the others?

Sir WILLIAM ANSON: No deduction has been made at present. Claims have been made by the managers of other voluntary schools in Merionethshire, and the Board of Education are in communication with them on the subject.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: At any rate, no deduction has been made in respect of these schools.

Sir WILLIAM ANSON: That is so.

Loughrea and Athenry Police Force.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many extra police have been drafted into the districts of Loughrea and Athenry; where have they been brought from: and will he consider the advisability of charging the districts named, instead of the county at large, with their cost.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.): Between March 30th and April 8th, a force of sixty-five extra police was stationed in Loughrea, Athenry, and other districts in the East Riding of Galway. The extra force was reduced by ten men on the latter date. The police have been drawn from a number of counties, and the question of the area of charge is at present under consideration.

The Estates Commissioners and Intimidation and Outrage in Ireland.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will take steps to ensure that the Estates Commissioners shall not buy any farms on estates where either intimidation has been used with the object of forcing the occupier to give up possession or outrages have been committed with the same object.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Estates Commissioners have already caused persons interested to be informed that intimidation, if resorted to, would constrain them not to purchase farms or estates. This matter will be further dealt with in the regulations about to be laid on the Table, and every effort will be made by the Government in this and other directions to cope with this form of crime.

Cost of Kingstown Urban Council's Address of Welcome to the King.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he has received a resolution passed by the Kingstown Urban Council protesting against the Local Government Board in allowing the auditor to surcharge members of the council in connection with an address of welcome to His Majesty during his first visit to Ireland; and, if so, what action does he intend taking in the matter.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Yes, Sir. The resolution was received, and on Monday last a letter was written by my direction to the district council, a copy of which I have forwarded to my hon. friend.

Irish Poor Law and Local Government Officers.

Mr. HAVILAND BURKE (King's County, Tullamore): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Poor Law and other local officers previous to being sanctioned by the Local Government Board have to sign a query sheet promising to conform to certain regulations issued by the Local Government Board, and in existence at the time of appointment, and that these regulations or duties are specified under the headings of the different offices; and will he say whether any officer who complies with the regulations prescribed for his office and discharges the duties accordingly, can be disturbed in his tenure of office by either the local authority under whom he serves or by the Local Government Board; and, if so, to state the Act of Parliament and the section; whether there is any rule laid down in the Local Government Board office for determining the punishments to be meted out to the Poor Law and other local officers for transgression of or dereliction in the discharge of duty; and whether there have ever been any instances in which Poor Law officers have been dismissed by the Local Government Board without their boards of guardians ever having been apprised of bad marks being made against them in the Local Government Board offices; and, if so, will he state the cases and the causes which led to such action.

Mr. WALTER LONG: With the hon. Member's permission I will furnish a printed reply to this Question.

Lavagh Evicted Tenant.

Mr. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that John Quinn, an evicted tenant on the estate of Sir Joselyn Gore Booth, situate at Lavagh, near Tubbercurry, county Sligo, has left the question of his reinstatement for settlement to the Estates Commissioners and the agent of the estate, and has signed an agreement to that effect; and that the present occupier, Edward Lang, has signed a similar agreement, both agreements being witnessed by the parish priest, the Rev. B. Quinn; and, if so, whether, seeing that this estate is about to be sold to the tenants under the Act of 1903, an immediate settlement of this case will be brought about.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Commissioners are prepared to consider any proposed arrangement between the landlord, the evicted tenant, and the present occupier, but the matter in its present stage is not one for the intervention of the Commissioners.

W. J. Griffith's Estate, Killery, County Sligo.

Mr. WILLIAM McKILLOP (Sligo, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the estate of W. J. Griffith, at Killery, near Ballintogher, county Sligo, has been for many years in the Land Court; and that an order was made by the Land Judge that the estate should be inspected with a view to its purchase by the Estates Commissioners, and to its resale to the tenants; will he say if the estate has been inspected; and, if not, can he explain the cause of the delay; and will he give instructions to have the inspection proceeded with as soon as possible.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Commissioners issued a request to the Land Judge, under the 7th Section of the Act of 1903, in February last. The tenants are now withholding payment of their rents, and the Land Judge has directed, in consequence, that all further proceedings towards a sale shall be abandoned so long as the tenants maintain this attitude.

Catholic Clerks in the Irish Agricultural Department.

Mr. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will obtain information as to whether the chief clerk of the Agricultural Department acted wholly on his own initiative in sending for one of the Catholic gentlemen of the veterinary branch and endeavouring to induce him to withdraw from the signed representation which that gentleman, in common with other Catholics in the branch, had laid before the secretary.

Mr. WALTER LONG: This Question was fully answered on the 1st March.† The chief clerk acted on behalf of the Department.

King's County Constabulary Force.

Mr. REDDY (King's County, Birr): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the county inspector and five district inspectors, Royal Irish Constabulary, at present stationed in King's County, are Protestants, and that the Catholic members of the force in that county are subjected to persecution because of their religion, particularly on the part of District Inspector Taylour; and what steps he proposes taking to remedy this grievance.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Yes, Sir; it happens that the officers referred to are Protestants, but I have ascertained from the Inspector-General that there is not the smallest foundation for the suggestions in the Question.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxlii., 27.

Sergeant Flynn, R.I.C.

Mr. REDDY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Sergeant Flynn, Kinnity, King's County, was lately obliged to retire through the action of District Inspector Taylour, who sought to compel him to act as caretaker for the Protestant rector of the district and to prevent trespass on the rector's land; and whether, as Sergeant Flynn was forced to retire last month, three years before his time for full pension had expired, steps will be taken to protect Catholic members of the force from religious persecution on the part of officers.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The hon. Member has not been correctly informed. There is no foundation whatever for the suggestions in the Question. The sergeant's retirement was quite voluntary on his part, after a service of twenty-six years, and he was awarded the pension to which his service entitled him.

Irish Public Officials.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG: On behalf of the hon. Member for North Antrim, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the information from candidates for, or Civil servants in, public departments in Ireland as to their respective places of education, already given for the purposes of the Civil Service or their respective departments is to be regarded as confidential, or if such can be published without the assent of such candidate or servant; and if this rule applies to the Civil Service in England.

Mr. WALTER LONG: I cannot answer this Question in the general form in which it is framed. In some cases the information supplied would not be treated as confidential; in other cases it would be so treated. The point must depend on the occasion and circumstances under which the information was communicated. As far as I have been able to ascertain, the same rule applies to the Civil Service in England.

Mr. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that in recent years a similar Return was ordered by Parliament in connection with Assistant Land Commissioners and resident magistrates, and that there is, too, an annual Return showing the religion of Irish justices of the peace? Does he still adhere to his statement that there is no precedent for such a Return?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I am not aware I ever said there was no precedent. What I said was that in granting a Return I must be guided by the advice of my law officers both as to my powers and as to the rights of those affected by the proposed Return.

Mr. MACVEAGH: Surely if Parliament has a right to demand information from Justices of the Peace it can do so from public servants whose salaries are on the Estimates.

Mr. WALTER LONG: It is not for me as a layman to interpret the law. It is for the law officers, and by their opinion I shall be guided.

Outrages in Ireland.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will grant a Return showing the number and nature of outrages committed in the province of Connaught and in the counties of Clare, Cork, Limerick, Kerry, Tipperary, Queen's County, and King's County, which have been reported by the police to the Irish Government since 1st December, 1904; and whether, in respect of any such reported outrages, any orders were issued by the Irish Executive that they were not to be included or mentioned in the reports furnished to the Judges of Assize in these counties or any of them; and, if so, will he state the number of outrages in respect of which such orders were given.

Mr. MACVEAGH: I beg also to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will grant a Return showing the number and nature of outrages, assaults on persons, attacks on property, and disturbances in the province of Ulster which have been reported by the police to the Irish Government since 1st December, 1904; and whether, in respect of any such reported outrages, any orders were issued by the Irish Executive that they were not to be included or mentioned in the reports furnished to the Judges of Assize in these counties or any of them; and, if so, will he state the number of outrages in respect of which such orders were given.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Returns of all outrages or other offences of an indictable character reported by the police in each county of Ireland, since the date mentioned, will be prepared and laid on the Table. No orders of the nature indicated in the second part of the Questions were issued by the Executive or by the Constabulary authorities.

Howth Harbour.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): On behalf of the hon. Member for the Northern Division of Dublin County, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the complaints made of the condition of Howth Harbour at the last meeting of the North Dublin Rural District Council, and especially to the statements made as to the necessity for a repairing slip in that place; and whether he will recommend the Board of Works, in whose charge Howth Harbour is placed, to take some action towards satisfying the public requirements mentioned.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY of the TREASURY (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.): The attention of the Board of Works has not been drawn to the condition of Howth Harbour. Any representations made to it will be considered.

Dredgers for Irish Harbours.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN: On behalf of the hon. Member for the Northern Division of Dublin County, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that only one dredger appears to be at the disposal of the Board of Works for use in the small harbours of Ireland, he will consider the advisability of urging on the Treasury the necessity of supplying the means of purchasing or constructing another dredger for such use, so that the small harbours referred to, many of which are almost completely blocked up with accumulations of mud and sand, may be dredged within a reasonable period.

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH: The dredger referred to was bought out of the Development Grant funds, and its object was to reduce the cost of dredging. The responsibility for dredging lies with the harbour authorities, and there is no obligation on the Government or on the Board of Works to provide a dredger.

Captain French's Estate, King's County.

Mr. REDDY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the conditions of sale entered into between Captain French and his tenants, near Kinnitty, King's County; whether he is aware that there are four cottiers on this estate, none of whom hold more than three or four acres of land, and that the landlord had on hand over 200 acres of grazing lands, which he has divided into large farms and given to farmers, some of whom were not on the estate; and whether the Estates Commissioners will refuse to sanction the sale until the uneconomic holdings on this property are enlarged to a sufficient size to enable the cottiers to live.

Mr. WALTER LONG: This estate has not yet come before the Commissioners, and, until it does, they can express no opinion in the matter.

Congested Districts Board and Untenanted Lands.

Mr. O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state whether the Congested Districts Board have any power under the Land Act of 1903, or under any former Acts, to utilise untenanted land acquired by them in unscheduled areas for the benefit of the occupiers of uneconomic holdings in these unscheduled areas.

MR. WALTER LONG: The 3rd Section of the Congested Districts Board Act, 1901, provides that where the Board purchase land in a non-congested district the Lord-Lieutenant may declare that such land be treated as part of the congested districts. The result is that the occupiers of such lands may be treated as though they were residents in congested districts.

Irish Creamery Inspectors.

MR. O'KELLY: On behalf of the hon. Member for North Leitrim, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Department of Agriculture and Technical Education for Ireland has recently appointed two creamery inspectors; and if so, can he state their names, addresses, and previous experience; were these posts open to competition; was an examination held; and, if so, was public notice given of it, and where was it held.

MR. WALTER LONG: The Department have appointed two dairy instructors, Messrs. Ward and Fant. Mr. Ward was a creamery manager for six years, and also holds the Department's certificate of competency. Mr. Fant was inspector of creameries for six years, and also had previous experience as creamery manager. There was no competition or examination for these appointments. The Department held an examination two years ago, but no suitable candidates presented themselves on that occasion.

Portavogie Fishing Fleet Disaster.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the disaster to the fishing fleet at Portavogie during the recent gales; and whether he will consider the possibility of making a special grant to meet the widespread distress caused by the loss of the fishing boats and gear.

MR. WALTER LONG: My attention has been drawn to the lamentable disaster to the fishing fleet at Portavogie on March 15th. I am considering the suggestion of my hon. friend in the second part of the Question.

Irish National Education—Rule 127 (b).

MR. O'KELLY: On behalf of the hon. Member for North Leitrim, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland on what date did the National Education Board for Ireland finally approve of, and adopt, Rule 127 (b); who were the Commissioners present at the meeting at which the rule was adopted; were there any vacancies on the Board at the time the rule was adopted; and, if so, can he say whether these vacancies have since been filled up; and can he give the names of the newly-appointed Commissioners.

MR. WALTER LONG: With the hon. Member's permission I will furnish a printed reply to this Question.

New Education Rule 127b.—Aughrin School Teacher.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in case the new rule (127b) of the National Board of Education in Ireland is put in operation, the salary of the national school teacher in Aughrin, county Wicklow, will be reduced from £130 to £56 a year; and, if so, will the teacher be given full compensation for the reduction in his income of £74 a year.

MR. WALTER LONG: The Commissioners of National Education inform me that it is very unlikely that the rule will affect this teacher's income in the manner suggested. I will take this opportunity of stating the result of my personal examination into the operation of the rule, which I undertook to make, during my visit to Ireland. The rule was designedly framed in the interests of boys under eight years of age who had received little or no instruction in schools where there were no mistresses, and especially in schools with only one male teacher. The necessity for such a rule was strongly pointed out in Mr. Dale's Report on primary education. I have received full assurances that the rule will not prejudicially affect the incomes of existing teachers. It will result in the removal of the great educational disadvantage attending the present over-subdivision of schools for boys and girls, by extending the system of mixed for separate schools. I am informed that there are, at the present moment, as many as 2,247 mixed national schools under Catholic management in Ireland. The Treasury have agreed to an arrangement by which the principal teachers of schools proposed to be amalgamated may be recognised in the combined schools, one as principal and the other, or others, as assistant teachers, such assistant teachers to be secured from any reduction of salary in consequence of amalgamation.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that this school teacher has been informed by the National Board that his salary is to be reduced.

MR. WALTER LONG: I am not aware of that. My Answer is based on the information I have received from the National Board. If the hon. Member will send particulars of individual cases I will inquire.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: Will the present teachers suffer any damage by a reduction of salary?

MR. WALTER LONG: The conclusion arrived at by the Board is that they will not.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Seeing that all the managers and teachers are against this rule, does the right hon. Gentleman think it reasonable to put it into operation?

MR. WALTER LONG: I am not sure they are all against it. Naturally if the result were to be an immediate reduction of salary the teachers might object, but if that is averted they may not.

MR. MACVEAGH: Will the teachers be heard before the National Board?

MR. WALTER LONG: They have made their views known, and have been told that no injustice will be done them. If individual cases of injustice are brought to my notice I will inquire into them.

Poor Law Medical Relief in County Louth.

MR. NOLAN (Louth, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state, in miles, the maximum distance between the dwellings of poor people who may require medical aid and the nearest dispensary under the new arrangement of the Grange, Collon, and Drumconrath districts, county Louth; whether his attention has been called to the proceedings of a meeting of the Ardee guardians recently held, and the resolution upon the subject adopted at the same; and whether, seeing that the new arrangement will necessitate a considerable expenditure upon buildings for medical officers' residences, he will carry out the late Chief Secretary's promise to have a sworn inquiry upon the spot, and take local opinion into account before making any change in the old arrangement.

MR. WALTER LONG: The existing dispensaries have been retained under the new arrangement, and consequently the distance to be travelled is precisely the same as before. There is no proposal to build new residences for the medical officers. A local public inquiry was held on 20th January, 1904, as a result of which the Board, with all the facts before them, made their Order re-arranging the districts. I am not aware that my right hon. friend promised any further inquiry, nor, as I am at present advised, is one necessary.

Ardee Scheme for Labourers' Cottages.

MR. NOLAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the guardians in Ardee No. 1 Rural District, county Louth, submitted a scheme to the Local Government Board for the erection of a number of labourers' cottages about six months ago; and whether, seeing that the scheme is still in abeyance, he can account for the delay.

MR. WALTER LONG: The scheme has not yet been submitted to the Board by the district council. The responsibility for any delay does not rest with the Board.

Dublin Civil Service—Assistant Clerks.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: On behalf of the hon. Member for the Northern Division of Dublin County, I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that there are at present assistant clerks (New Class) serving in various public departments in Dublin who have from eight to nine years established service in addition to several years temporary service, and who now, at the age of twenty-eight or twenty-nine years, are allowed a salary of only £80 per annum; and whether the case of those assistant clerks (New Class), who obtained no benefit whatever from the revised regulations promulgated by the Treasury two years ago, will receive special consideration in connection with the memorial now before the Treasury.

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH: I have nothing to add to the Answer I gave to the hon. Member for the College Green Division of Dublin on this subject last Thursday, to which I would refer the hon. Member.†

Irish Cut Flower Industry—Post Office Facilities.

Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that from experiments made at Caherdaniel, county Kerry, the climatic conditions are specially suitable for the growing of flowers such as violets, narcissi, and daffodils; whether, seeing that the nearest railway station is nineteen miles distant, he can state whether any special facilities for forwarding cut flowers in large quantities will be given if an industry of this nature is started; and can he say whether any, and, if so, what facilities are given by international agreement to the growers of flowers in the South of France and elsewhere.

Lord STANLEY: I was not aware of the experiments to which the hon. Member refers, but I will have inquiry made as regards the facilities for despatching parcels by post from Caherdaniel and will acquaint the hon. Member with the result. As regards the latter part of the hon. Member's Question, I may say that at the Postal Union Congress held at Washington, proposals were made by several Continental countries to extend the provisions of the sample post in a manner which would have operated in favour of Continental flower-growers. Those proposals were, however, not accepted, and the Postal Union Convention, which in its present form was the issue of that Congress and governs international postal relations, makes no specific provision for the transmission of fresh flowers. They can be sent at the letter or parcel rate of postage, or, if they are genuine trade samples of no saleable value, at the reduced rate applicable to samples.

Scottish Church Dispute.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the fact that many of the notices of ejection from their manses recently served on ministers of the United Free Church expire on May 28th, he will take care that provision be made by legislation, or otherwise, that such ejectments shall not be carried out until Government legislation on the whole subject has received the assent of Parliament.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): The objections to interim legislation are great and obvious, and I am sure the hon. Gentleman is well acquainted with them. He is also acquainted with the statement I made the other day that in our view nothing that could happen in the interval between the inquiry undertaken by the Commission and legislation would alter the character of that legislation when we are able to propose and carry it through the House. I understand that the object which the Free Church have had in issuing these notices is to obtain the use of the manses where they have already got the use of the church. I make no pronouncement on the propriety or impropriety of that course in particular cases; but the grounds for their action, at all events, are so far, if I rightly state it, quite intelligible. I understand, however, that after notice of ejectment has been given there is power of appealing to the Courts on the subject, and that that appeal may last an indefinite period, going up from Court to Court to the House of Lords. As regards interim possession in such cases, it would rest with the judge, I think, having regard to all the circumstances of the case, to decide whether convenience and justice were best served by leaving existing occupants in possession or requiring them to leave. Those are all the facts known to me; and I think the hon. Gentleman will perceive that it is quite impossible for us to bring in, in those circumstances, an interim Bill, pending the final legislation we hope to introduce.

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† See page 71.

Mr. BUCHANAN: May I take it from the right hon. Gentleman that the interests involved with regard to manses will not be prejudiced in any case by action taken in the meantime?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, that is so.

Mr. BUCHANAN: The right hon. Gentleman is somewhat in error in his statement of fact. I can give at least one case of a manse being claimed without the church being taken, and I believe there are other cases.

The Customs Vote.

Mr. ERNEST GRAY (West Ham, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that several Members of this House have expressed the desire that an opportunity should be given for discussing the Customs Vote; and whether he will endeavour to satisfy this desire by submitting that Vote as first Order on some early date.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I shall be most happy to meet the hon. Member's wishes and put the Vote down for an early Thursday.

Lord Selborne and the Liberal Unionist Club.

Mr. JOHN CAMPBELL (Armagh, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the fact that at a meeting of the Liberal Unionist Club, held at the Westminster Palace Hotel, on Wednesday, April 12th, the Earl of Selborne, His Majesty's High Commissioner for South Africa, was elected at that meeting a vice-president of this political organisation; whether it is in accordance with the rules of the public service that a person holding the position of His Majesty's High Commissioner for South Africa should remain an office-bearer in a political organisation; and whether he will take steps to secure the Earl of Selborne's retirement from the post of vice-president of the Liberal Unionist Club.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have inquired of Lord Selborne what the facts are, and he tells me that some time ago he gave specific notice that all political posts of the kind referred to by the hon. Gentleman must be abandoned by him now that he has become High Commissioner for South Africa.

Redistribution.

Mr. BLACK (Banffshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the Government's scheme of Redistribution, it is proposed to make provision for paying out of public funds the expenses incurred to returning officers at Parliamentary elections, so as to facilitate the return of manual labourers and other persons of moderate means to the service of this House.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I hardly think the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman is one that is germane to a Redistribution Bill.

Public Accounts Committee's Reports.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury can he now undertake to give a day during the present session for the consideration by the House of the Reports of the Public Accounts Committee, and for taking the decision of the House upon the recommendations embodied therein.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have on a previous occasion stated that if it is the general wish of the House I am prepared to give up one of the Thursdays allotted to Supply for the discussion of the Reports of the Public Accounts Committee, which although not technically Supply are very closely associated with the financial business of the House. If there should be any reluctance to give up one of the days allotted to Supply, I will endeavour to find some other opportunity, but it must be understood that I cannot in that case promise a whole day.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. LOUGH: Will the Prime Minister state what will be the first business after the holidays?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: On Tuesday, May 2nd, the day the House reassembles after the Easter holidays, the Second Reading of the Aliens Bill will be taken.

Mr. LOUGH: Surely the right hon. Gentleman will reconsider that proposal. The usual custom is that no contentious or interesting business is taken on the first day after the holidays.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The old practice was to reassemble on the Monday; but to meet the convenience of Members who are unable to return by Monday, I have put off the reassembling till Tuesday, and, in the circumstances, I think the House might proceed that day with business that is contentious and interesting.

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich): Does the right hon. Gentleman propose to give the Aliens Bill precedence over the Unemployed Bill? It is a very serious matter.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The urgency of the Unemployed Bill is not nearly so great now as it was in the recent period of distress. But I do not propose to give one Bill precedence over the other. I propose to take the Second Reading of the Aliens Bill before I take the Second Reading of the Unemployed Bill.

NEW BILLS.

LUNACY BILL.

"To amend the Lunacy Acts," presented by Mr. Attorney-General; supported by Mr. Solicitor-General; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, May 2nd, and to be printed. [Bill 179.]

COUNTY COURTS (No. 2) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to County Courts," presented by Mr. Attorney-General; supported by Mr. Solicitor-General; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, May 2nd, and to be printed. [Bill 180.]

AGRICULTURAL RATES ACT, 1896, ETC., CONTINUANCE BILL.

[Second Reading.]

Order for Second Reading read.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): As the object of the Bill, the Second Reading of which I rise to move, is to continue an Act with the subject of which the House is already thoroughly familiar, and as it has been discussed at considerable length on more than one occasion in recent years, my observations this afternoon may be comparatively brief. The effect of the Bill will be to continue until March 31st, 1910, the Agricultural Rates Act, 1896, the Tithe Rent Charge Act, 1899, and certain Acts relating to Scotland, all of which otherwise expire on March 31st next year. It will be remembered that when the original Continuance Act was introduced in 1901, it was brought in in a form which would have given permanence to the Acts to which it applies. That proposal was strenuously objected to by the Opposition, and my right hon. friend the Leader of the House explained that we did not consider the scheme in the form embodied in those Acts to be in any sense a final or permanent scheme, or that, in the opinion of the Government, it would not be necessary, within a comparatively brief period, to introduce a comprehensive measure of local taxation reform. He accordingly expressed his willingness to limit the Continuance Bill to a period of four years, on the understanding that only one night should be spent upon the discussion of the Second Reading. That proposal was accepted. The operation of the Bill was limited to four years. The Second Reading only took one night, and the main stages of the Bill were passed with little or no opposition.

Now, four years have since passed and we are practically in the same position as in 1901. We do not now, any more than then, profess that the scheme contained in these Acts is final or a permanent scheme, or that it deals once and for all with the many difficult and complicated problems connected with the question of local taxation. On the other hand, we held then, and we hold still, that those Acts met a real grievance, and, however much the Acts may be objected to in principle by hon. Gentlemen opposite, I hardly think that they will venture to deny that proposition. At all events, hon. Members on the other side of the House representing agricultural constituencies and Liberal candidates in agricultural constituencies would hardly dispute that those Acts do meet real grievances, and, to some extent, remedy them. I do not suppose that, at the present stage, this Continuance Bill is likely to meet with serious opposition, but perhaps it may be asked—I gather from a cheer just now that we shall be asked—why it is that the Government have not utilised the interval to introduce that more comprehensive measure at which my my right hon. friend hinted during the course of the discussion in 1901. Well, I do not think the answer is a very difficult one. To deal with so complicated a question as local taxation, a question involving so many conflicting interests, necessarily requires a favourable combination of circumstances. I will mention two senses in which combination is required before any Government can undertake such an Act. First, there must be an overflowing Exchequer, for, as far as I am aware, no complete solution is likely to be found without making large grants from Imperial sources; and, in the second place, it is necessary that there should be a Government and a House of Commons with plenty of leisure before it, and able and willing to devote a whole session, perhaps even more than one session, to dealing with the question. Neither of these conditions exists in our case.

But, over and above that, I may remind the House that it is admitted on all sides that before any comprehensive reform of local taxation can be undertaken the first thing necessary would be to establish a uniform basis of valuation. With that object in view, in 1903, and again in 1904, Valuation Bills were prepared by my right hon. friend who is now the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and one of these was introduced in Parliament last year; but it met with considerable opposition. A revised Bill is in an advanced stage of preparation, and I trust will be introduced before very long, in accordance with the promise given in the King's Speech; but, of course, what progress it may be possible to make with that Bill must depend to a large extent upon the opposition which it encounters, and I fear experience has shown that even in the preliminary stages there are many pitfalls. I may, perhaps, briefly state why, in the meantime, and pending the introduction of larger and more comprehensive measures of reform, we support the admittedly incomplete remedy provided by the Acts which this Bill proposes to continue. The root of the whole matter is the fact that almost the entire burden, I may say the entire burden, of the rates falls in this country upon realty, and that personalty escapes scot free. This would not signify very much if all the money levied in rates were expended in a beneficial manner, and if that benefit were distributed in anything like proportion to the payments made by the different classes of ratepayers. Everybody knows, however, that that is very far from being the case. A great many of the services which are paid for out of local rates are not services in which the ratepayers, as such, have any special interest; they are in the nature of national services. And there are also other services to which certain classes of ratepayers undoubtedly pay more than in proportion to their ability and more than in proportion to the benefit which they receive for them. Hence arise two grievances. In the first place, there is the grievance which all ratepayers have in common, though not, I think, in an equal measure, against personalty, in personalty not contributing towards the rates; and, secondly, there is the special grievance of the agricultural ratepayers and payers of tithe rent-charge, in that they are called upon to contribute more in proportion to their abilities than others and receive less benefit.

These two grievances have already, to a certain extent, been met, quite apart from the Acts to which this Bill refers. They have been met, the first grievance, in part, by grant already made by the Exchequer to the Local Taxation Fund; and the second grievance has also been, to a considerable extent, recognised, at all events in principle, with regard to those rates which are levied for sanitary or other purposes of a similar character, in respect of which agricultural land and tithe are only rated to the extent of one-fourth. The Acts included in this Continuance Bill carry these remedies one step further. They are based upon the unfairness of the position in which agricultural ratepayers and the clerical owners of tithe rent-charge are placed as regards the other rates besides the sanitary rates, and in particular in regard to those rates which are levied for expenditure upon onerous services of a national character; and, as regards such rates, they provide relief not to the full extent of the Public Health Acts, but to the extent of a half. But, as a reduction in the rates in respect of agricultural land necessarily means an increased burden upon other ratepayers, the case of those other ratepayers has been met, though we do not consider their grievance as great as the agricultural ratepayer; and the Act of 1896 provided that the deficiency should be met from moneys voted by Parliament. The scheme of relief which the present Bill continues for another period of four years may be imperfect, it may be open to criticism from various points of views, and it is confessedly incomplete and provisional. But, on the other hand, what we say is that it does meet the grievance on lines which are broadly just and equitable, and it holds the field, and, in my opinion, will and must continue to hold the field, until a more systematic and comprehensive form of local taxation is devised and passed into law to take its place. I beg to move that the Bill be read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I think it will be found in the course of this debate that the opinions so strongly held and expressed on this side of the House both in 1896 and in 1901 remain among us still and have not been in the least degree abated; and, indeed, many of our complaints are practically admitted by the Government themselves. If the object of this Bill is the equitable readjustment of rating we are as much in favour of it as anybody, but what we think is that this Bill has set about it the wrong way; that the Government have dealt with it, as is admitted, in a partial and imperfect manner; as we say, also, in an unfair and inequitable manner as between different classes and different interests. It is inequitable as between town and country, inequitable as between different occupations and the like; and also we think that what has been done is open to this very serious objection, that a great part of the benefit, if it was ever designed for the advantage of the farmer, will drift as levies are made in the course of years into the pocket of the landowner. These are our feelings on the subject, and we hold them as strongly as ever. But, of coure, when you have had nine years of these subventions to a certain class, I think it is rather unusual and abrupt, as a principle at any rate in our dealing with these questions, to take away that assistance at once. It is one of the evils of such a mode of dealing with these questions. If I were to seek a parallel case, supposing a protective duty were imposed on some article which was found to be injurious to the interests of the country, we know how exceedingly difficult it would be, vested interests having been acquired, to interfere with that protective duty. And so it is that those who are most opposed to certain legislation may find it exceedingly difficult, after a term of years, to vote *simpliciter* for its repeal.

The right hon. Gentleman now Chief Secretary for Ireland said in 1901—

> "What we want to do is to deal effectually with the whole rating question."

So do we. But if the Government are so anxious to deal with the whole rating question, and have imposed a limit upon this particular measure in order that they may have the opportunity of dealing with it, why have they not done it? The 1896 Bill was only temporary; the Bill of 1901 was only temporary; and now, again, this is only temporary. The President of the Local Government Board says that one reason why it could not be dealt with is that it requires an overflowing Exchequer. Who is it that has caused the Exchequer not to be overflowing? The whole policy of the Government and the administration of the finances of the country have led to the depletion of the Exchequer, and now they allege that as a reason why they cannot deal with this great subject. But, after all, I do not know that an extremely overflowing Exchequer need be required, because this is a question of the readjustment of taxation. It is not a question of subvention so much as a question of readjustment so as to establish a fair system between one class of ratepayers and others. Then the right hon. Gentleman says that it would require a Government with leisure. The Government have given themselves very little leisure, because they have been occupied with great schemes of the same class as their proceedings in this matter—namely, schemes for the benefit of one part of the interests of the country in which the interests of the rest of the country were too often disregarded. They have been busy saving the pockets of the subscribers to Church schools, busy establishing those schools on a firmer basis, and they have been busy, above all, in entrenching and fortifying the position of the brewers. Now they say that they have no leisure to deal with this question, which would have brought advantage and contentment to the whole community if it had been rightly dealt with, and which has been, by their own admission, urgent throughout all these years.

I think it is worth while to quote the account given of this matter by the Prime Minister in 1901. I quote the words of the right hon. Gentleman because it was so well put that it cannot be improved upon. The statement of the right hon. Gentleman arose out of a question as to the arrangements for the debate, and I asked whether a reasonable limit ought not to be placed on the operation of the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman said that he could not now discuss the merits of the Bill, but the view of the Government was that the amount of relief given should be temporary. The right hon. Gentleman also said that the actual machinery was essentially imperfect and the Government never contemplated that the Bill as drafted could be a permanent settlement of the question, and that if passed in its present form steps would be taken for further legislation at no distant date. The right hon. Gentleman was also prepared to consider the question of a time limit, though it would be madness, he said, to make the time limit too short. Within the next four or five years the Government would be prepared to deal with the subject. On this I thought that "four or five years" was rather a vague term; I thought three years would be enough, and the right hon. Gentleman said, "Shall we, in order to meet the right hon. Gentleman, split the difference, and say four years?" But here we are again in the same position, the same concessions made, the same demands from this side of the House, and not an inch further forward than we were before. I ask in these circumstances what should be done by a well-disposed and straightforward Government? I have said already that it is absurd to suppose you can root up after nine years without any qualification whatever an arrangement of this kind. No one that I am aware of has proposed to do that: but I do think that pressure should be put on the Government, to use a colloquial phrase, "to hurry up" and not to allow so much water to flow under the bridge before they tackle this question, the urgency and importance of which they themselves admit. I trust that the right hon. Gentleman will again apply that saving principle of statesmanship which he adopted four years ago, and will split the difference and modify to that extent the limit of time for which this Bill is to prevail.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): The right hon. Gentleman has asked what should be done by well-meaning and straightforward men in dealing with this measure. Every one will admit that the right hon. Gentleman comes under the definition of a well-meaning and straightforward man. The right hon. Gentleman's position, however, is that the Bill should not be opposed, but that an appeal should be made to the Government to cut down the four years and convert the period into two. I do not think that much would be gained by that, and I do not know whether the experience of the past shows that there is likely to be much gain. The right hon. Gentleman reproaches us with not having in the last four years carried out a large scheme of local taxation reform.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Following five years before.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will not go into the way in which we have used the time of the House. But each session we were told that we were overcrowding the Speech from the Throne with legislation; and we have not been more fortunate than our predecessors in carrying through all the programme we have suggested from time to time, though I think we have come nearer to the goal than any of those who have held office before. The right hon. Gentleman speaks in an airy, irresponsible manner of the facility of dealing with local taxation, though my right hon. friend, in introducing the Bill, pointed out that in the first place you must have as a preliminary measure a Valuation Bill. I do not know what view the right hon. Gentleman takes of the facility of passing such a Bill. I think that it would be a much less easy task than he at present realises. But even then you only come to the threshold of the question as to how you are to deal with the problem of local taxation itself; and here the right hon. Gentleman indicated why he thinks it is so very easy a matter. He speaks of the question as a readjustment of local burdens. The right hon. Gentleman will find that hard enough by itself, but it is much more than that. I do not believe that either he or any hon. Member will ever deal with the subject as one of the readjustment of local burdens pure and simple. It cannot be so treated. The right hon. Gentleman also spoke with very statesmanlike moderation of the extreme difficulty of attacking vested interests, interests once set up, and the bitterness of feeling and friction which attends any such measure. What is his own idea of the reforms of local taxation? It is to attack every vested interest in the country. All those who at present pay too little will have to pay more, and those who pay too much will be relieved, no doubt.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): That is not attacking them.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is what the right hon. Gentleman described as attacking vested interests. I take the right hon. Gentleman's vocabulary and it ought to be sufficient for the hon. Member. No Government can venture on any readjustment of local taxation among the different ratepayers unless they can smooth the progress by some contribution from Imperial funds. Nor is this theoretically unjust. On the contrary, it is unquestionably and intrinsically just. There are objections legitimately made to the present mode of grants in aid of local rates, and financial purists may object to the method. But if we take our eye off the mere question of technical method and look at the broad equities of the case, it is preposterous, in a country in which the needs of civilization throw more and more burdens on the local taxpayer, that that local taxpayer should be the owner and occupier of real property. It cannot be justified on any ground of broad equity. That gross natural injustice of the present state of things will meet inevitably any Government which tries to deal with this question in the broad, comprehensive spirit so easy to talk about and so difficult to carry out; and if the right hon. Gentleman and his friends deal with the subject in that spirit they will have even a more unpleasant time of it than I think, for other reasons, may be in store for them. But the truth is, that the right hon. Gentleman, quite rightly from his own point of view, only desires to get out legitimately of the rather delicate situation in which the extreme and almost factious violence of ten years ago put him and his friends. I think that he has got out of that position with grace and dignity. He has curbed, temporarily at least, his haste.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, no! My feelings are entirely unchanged.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I was talking of his policy, not of his feelings. I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the statesmanlike wisdom and moderation of his speech. If I have some criticisms to make on the rough sketch he has made of the kind of Bill, comprehensive, universal, to give advantage and content to every class in the community, and if I have commented adversely on his general views of this great subject, that does not diminish the admiration which I express for the facility with which he has extricated himself and his friends from a position which at one moment looked as if it might be difficult.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax) said hon. Members on his side of the House held more strongly than ever their opinion on the measure, and he had ventured to place an Amendment to the Second Reading on the Paper, which attacked the crudeness and unfairness of the method contained in the proposals now introduced for the second time, and which set forth an alternative method of giving the needed assistance. In submitting the Amendment he trusted that at any rate, although they might not be able to defeat this policy of "drift and dole," they would be able to show that there was a method which would be more satisfactory, more equitable, and by which the admitted difficulty might be dealt with. This Bill had been introduced without even the condescension of a ten minutes address from the Minister of the Crown in charge of it. Let the House remember that the first Bill on this subject was introduced in 1896, and was brought in avowedly as a temporary measure pending the Report of the Royal Commission which was then sitting. That Commission had long since made its Report, and yet the Government a second time asked for a renewal of this Act without showing the faintest sign of acting on the Report. There appeared to be less signs now of bringing in any comprehensive or satisfactory measure than there was in 1901, yet surely in the period that had intervened the crudity and unfairness of this proposal had been established beyond question.

First as to the unfairness between agriculturists themselves in different localities and on different kinds of land. This Bill dealt with many varieties of land. They had land rented as low as 5s. per acre—land which was barely able to, even if it could, bear the tithes charged upon it. Then they had the average land rented at about 25s. an acre, and they had land rented at 50s. an acre, such as was to be found in prosperous dairy-farming districts of Cheshire. Lastly, they had suburban land rented at £5 per acre. Those lands alike received relief under this Bill, but in what proportions? Did the poorest land receive the most and the richest land receive the least? It was the exact opposite. The greatest relief was given where it was the least needed, and the least relief was given where it was the most needed. The weak land in Essex and East Anglia, which had been the hardest hit by the importation of cheap food from foreign countries, and whose necessity gave rise to this Bill, should have received the greatest part of its benefits, but it had received the least, thus proving that relief was given out according to riches and not according to poverty. The unfairness could be established out of the mouth of the Government itself. The evidence given before the Royal Commission by the present Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Pretyman) some time after the Act had been in operation showed it. The hon. Member in reply to questions said—

> "It is a bad method . . . I cannot say that I think it is entirely satisfactory because the relief is given to the land which is best able to bear the burden—that gets the most relief; and the land which is least able to bear the burden gets the least relief. That is inseparable from this form of relief, and that is one of the reasons, I suppose, why it was made only temporary."

In spite of that evidence the Government came a second time to ask for that form of relief. Another member of the Government giving evidence before the Commission was the Deputy-Chairman of Committees (Mr. Jeffreys) who stated—

> "No, what I say is that, unfortunately, on the poor land where the assessment is low—I know land, for instance where the assessment is only 5s. an acre, and the rates per acre therefore are very low indeed—the relief that we get is very small."

An eminent agriculturist gave similar evidence and said—

> "I cannot say that I think the principle upon which the Agricultural Rating Act was

passed last year was altogether wise. It gives the minimum of help where most is wanted. It chiefly goes to help the rates where the help is least needed."

Secondly, as between the different classes of ratepayers in the rural districts there was equal crudity and equal unfairness. The relief given under this Act was limited to the amount required to pay one-half of the agricultural rates on the land when the Act was first passed. The results had been very disastrous in rural districts because it made in the case of all future increase of rates a double burden on that class of property. It had established a heavier burden on houses. They had been hearing recently of better accommodation for the agricultural labourer, and of measures to keep them from being driven out of rural districts into the towns, and yet they had an Act which would press more heavily than before on houses in rural districts. Even farmers through their own buildings and improvements found their burdens doubled by this Act. In the parish of Brockworth 117 persons had their rates raised, whilst only sixteen persons received any benefit under the Act. The rates in the parish of Langport, in Somersetshire, had been increased by fourpence in the pound on other classes of property owing to the operation of this Act. Then in the county of Buckinghamshire a table had been prepared showing that the total increased charge due to the operation of this Act on other classes of property had been £8,408 during the last five years. One of the things which agriculturists were attempting to do at the present time was to bring about co-operation and the increase of dairy farming in order to compete with the imports coming from Denmark, and yet the very operation of this Act was to throw heavier burdens on every farmer and landowner.

Then as between the owner and occupier they had a similar state of injustice. The right hon. Member for West Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks Beach), when Chancellor of the Exchequer, gave his opinion on that point very clearly. He said—

> "In my belief—and I have always said so—it will be a benefit to the English farmer certainly at first, probably for the whole time of its operation; but when fresh tenancies are created, when there is a change in tenancies, especially in the present state of the market as between landlord and tenant, if the change should be more in favour of the landlord than at present, then no doubt—I think it is admitted—the owner of the land will have an advantage."

All the time these renewals went on new tenancies were created, and with each renewal more went to the owner and less went to the occupier. Yet it had been the occupiers who had borne the burden of the depression in agriculture in recent times. There could be no manner of question that nine-tenths of the burden had been borne by the tenants. The evidence of the Agricultural Commission had been overwhelming on that point. They had the evidence of Mr. Pringle, with regard to the county of Northamptonshire, dealing with a long series of farmers' budgets, and that gentleman pointed out that all the profits over a certain number of farms in that series were £4,900, whilst the total rent paid to the landlords was £36,571. Mr. Pringle gave a series of cases in different counties in England showing how reduction on rents had been in no way comparable to the loss sustained by the tenants owing to the depression in agriculture, and showing in the whole series the profits to the farmers had been 1s. 3d. per acre, whilst the rents paid by them amounted to 24s. 3d. At the present time there was a proposal for putting the farmer into the position of the owner of the soil. He could not say he was much in favour of such a proposal at the present time, but the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bordesley had brought in a large scheme of land purchase in order to do away with the dual ownership of land in England, and he would point out that one serious result of the continuance of this unsatisfactory policy was that all such proposals as that which was now under consideration made it more difficult to carry out a scheme of that kind, because, as was seen in Ireland, they were now purchasing from the landlords their holdings at an increased value owing to a dole having been added to the capital value of the land. It was a most unsatisfactory policy. A few years ago they had to make a purchase on behalf of the War Office, and they found then how the price had been run up by the action which this House had taken. The hon. Member for King's Lynn gave some very useful figures upon that subject. He found that the price paid by the War Office for the purchase of land required in the neighbourhood of Salisbury Plain was out of all proportion to its value for the purposes of taxation. In the case of the estate of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol the value for estate duty amounted to £43,700, whereas the price paid by the War Office was £93,411, and no doubt there were many similar cases.

As between the town and country also this Bill was unjust. The policy of paying rates out of taxes meant that the poor were made to pay for the relief of the rich. In regard to the Exchequer grants it had been estimated that the result was that every man rated at less than £40 was condemned to pay out of his taxes money for the relief of those who were rated at a higher figure. In the case of the agricultural rates it was a positive hardship to those in the great cities. When they examined the case of accommodation land in the neighbourhood of the great towns, they found a very different state of things. Such land was only rated at one-fourth of its annual rental value, and its rental value was out of all proportion to its real or capital value. The rateable value of land in the neighbourhood of Bristol which came under this Act was £12,476. There was probably not an acre of that land which was not worth at least £400 or £500, much of it was ripe for building and worth £1,000 or £1,500 an acre. Yet in regard to that land the poorest wage-earners were being taxed in order to relieve the rich.

They could not get away from the fact that dealing with a question of this kind in this way was unjust. In all respects the method established by this Act was unfair and unequal with regard to every class which had to pay taxes. The real fact was that the farmer was taxed on his raw material and his improvements. Every effort of industry and intelligence which he put into his calling went to the owner of the land. It must be remembered that there were certain obligations placed upon the land of this country, certain duties to be carried out, obligations which were, in fact, a first charge upon the land long before they had any idea of rent. In early days, when grants were made by the Crown, there was the obligation to maintain the Army and the poor, and to uphold the Church, which at that time was the centre of education. Those services with regard to the ownership of land were not in their essence taxes at all, they were the reserved portion of the grant made by the State to the landowner, and if those burdens were moved off the shoulders of the owner on to those of the general tax-payer it was confiscation of that portion of the grant that the State specially reserved, and the community was doubly wronged. It had to pay rent for its own property and to pay taxes to increase its own rent. Those were the hereditary duties of owners for the discharge of which their privileges were granted. It was hard on the tenants who were rated and rented on their own exertions. What was required was that justice should be done to the tenant. It was necessary to remove from his shoulders the burdens which ought to be spread over the country as a whole in proportion to the benefit recceived from them. The occupier of land required to be put in a position where he would not any longer be rated for improvements which he himself made. This point was well illustrated by the case of some fruit growers in Perthshire who rented at £2 an acre some pasture land upon which they established a fruit-growing industry, and made it so successful that they required more land. But the owner asked £10 an acre for the land, and it was upon that £10 they would have been rated had the industry been capable of sustaining so heavy a burden. Thus the unfortunate tenant was both rented and rated on the improved methods he might introduce, and until this difficulty was dealt with in a thorough manner there could be no satisfactory solution of the question, and small holdings, co-operation, and so forth would only tend to defeat their own object. He had known cases of farms being cut up into small holdings, new buildings erected, and land made twice or three times as productive, and the only result had been to increase the crushing burden of rates and taxes on the improvements.

The essentials of a just system of local taxation were a national distribution of national services; a fair allocation to owners of land of services which were in their essence a just charge on the land—which would mean a distribution according to the value of the land in the various districts concerned; a reduction of the burdens on tenant farmers, and the prevention of the burdens falling on their own improvements. Both in Scotland and in Ireland the plan had long since been adopted of sharing these burdens between owner and occupier, and there was surely nothing very revolutionary in suggesting that some such system might be introduced in England and Wales. The arbitrary division in halves between the owner and the occupier was a crudity in some respects corresponding to the present system, but he believed a scheme could be devised whereby a division could be made on scientific and equitable lines, so that the owner should bear his proper burdens, and the tenant those burdens of which he himself obtained the benefit. An Amendment in this direction, moved by the hon. Member for East Northampton when the Act was first before the House, was defeated by the Unionist Party; he hoped they had now learnt to look more favourably on the proposal. He could conceive of no satisfactory way of dealing with these national services without to some extent pooling the great land values of our cities. For instance, agriculture ought not to be called upon to bear the chief share of the burden of main roads, the use of which belonged more to the inhabitants of cities than to the dwellers in the country. He believed a scheme ought to be, and could be, devised, whereby all such national services should be placed on one fund to which town and country contributed, not in proportion to area, but according to benefit received, and he knew of no better test of the benefit received than the value of the land in the respective districts. That in itself would bring great relief of burdens to the agricultural districts, but the relief would be founded on justice and not on charity.

He had ventured to put his Amendment before the House in the hope that when the time came round for this matter to be reconsidered there might be put forward a comprehensive and thorough proposal which would not have the unfair result of the present Act. A dying Government could not be expected to deal with the matter; they had had their opportunity twice over and had neglected it. The Act would have to be renewed, but he hoped it would be for a very short period, and that then the question would be faced and dealt with in a satisfactory manner. Nothing at present prevented the advance of agriculture and the development of agricultural districts so much as the question of local taxation, and he hoped the House would join in condemning the continuation of the policy of doles. It was not inconsistent for any Member who believed in the allocation of the burdens between owners and occupiers as a proper solution of the question to vote for his Amendment, although a temporary supporter of the measure itself. He begged to move the Amendment of which he had given notice, and he hoped the debate would be devoted more to the threshing out of a solution of the question than to the mere temporary renewal of the Act.

*Mr. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland) seconded the Amendment because it contained a direct challenge to the general policy of the Act and gave the House an opportunity of discussing one alternative to the proposal which the Government for the third time were bringing forward. From the haste with which the Government had brought in a mere continuation Bill, it was pretty clear it was a prelude to an election. But whether or not this was an election Bill, the Act which it proposed to renew was the only thing done by the Government during its ten years of office which had even the appearance of a measure for the relief of either rural or urban ratepayers. It was not a very magnificent record. It meant that there had been handed over to a particular industry rather more than £1,500,000 per annum, which would otherwise have gone to the relief of the general taxpayer. It was only a shilling an acre, though it was true the Government began by holding out to the farmer the hope that it was only the beginning of greater things. In 1896 they would not do more because a

Royal Commission was inquiring into the question of local taxation; in 1901 they asked for a renewal pending the consideration of the Report of that Royal Commission; and now they asked for a further renewal—he supposed pending the forgetting of that Report. At any rate there was no promise, hint, or pretence on the part of the Government that there was any larger policy to which this Act was leading which would embrace the whole question of the burden of rates and help all ratepayers instead of only one particular class. This was the end, as it was the beginning, of the Conservative policy; its friends would be able to say of the Government, "Rest in peace. They gave the farmer a shilling an acre."

But that was not all. Other measures had been passed since this Act was first introduced. The President of the Local Government Board had said that the Government had not had leisure to deal with the whole question of rating. But they had not done very much during the last three years. All the measures of importance they had passed were those dealing with licensing, the Sugar Convention, the imposing and the taking off of the corn duty, and education. What had been the effect of the Education Act on the farmer? All the advantage which it was claimed he could have reaped from the Agricultural Rates Act had been more than abolished by the large increase of rates which had taken place from one end of their county districts to the other. He had the honour of being a member of the Northumberland County Council and he knew what the outcry of the farmers was there. He could assure the House that they were quite as noisy against the rates as they were before the Act was passed. The farmers were the only class the Government had catered for, and yet they were still asking for larger consideration and more subventions from the Government. That was the way in which they hoped to meet the increase in the rates. He thought it would be somewhat of a miscalculation if the farmers thought that, in the next decade, it would be as easy to get relief out of the taxpayer, because they would not always have a Government in power dominated by the landlord interest, and they could not always expect the urban taxpayer to go on paying increased taxation for the sake of benefiting agriculturists. It was less likely that the town ratepayer would sanction an extension of this process when half the Party opposite were trying to impress upon him that he was being ruined through the decadence of industries in the towns. The outcry against the rates in towns was every day becoming more and more marked, and more subventions was a thing that could not possibly be thought of. But although agriculturists were unwilling to relinquish the advantage they got under this Bill they despaired just as much at the burden of the rates. If more relief was going to be given it should be given all round to all ratepayers upon some scientific and more reasonable plan which would attract the support of the towns. He did not think that many hon. Members regarded the method by which these subventions were given as either reasonable or logical, and he did not gather from the President of the Local Government Board that he thought that this was a satisfactory system.

A system of distribution was wanted, in the first place, which would enable those districts which wanted it most to get the relief. Quotations had been given in which a member of the Government and the hon. Member for Basingstoke had declared that the districts relieved most were those which least required it, and that those districts where agricultural depression was greatest were relieved the least. He thought they ought to turn for advice on this question to the Hamilton-Murray Report of the Local Taxation Committee. That was a Report with which Lord Balfour of Burleigh entirely agreed, and what was more, it was a scheme for distributing the national subventions which the Government themselves practically adopted when they gave the increased education grant under the Act of 1902. They made a proposal to give a fixed and increased contribution for national services to all unions, urban and rural alike. It was a proposal to give two kinds of grants—(1) a primary grant in order to bring the rate under a certain figure and administered so as to give most relief to the most needy districts;

and (2) a grant towards excess expenditure. The result would be that the largest proportional grant would be given to the poor and economically administered districts and the smallest to the wealthy and extravagant. If they went on giving larger grants to local authorities because the ratepayers were becoming more and more discontented with the burden of the rates, where were they going to get the money from? The Government were getting it from the ordinary taxpayer. That was just where this Amendment differed from the proposal of the Government and from the Amendment of the hon. Baronet the Member for Somerset. He thought that the ordinary taxpayer paid enough already and national economy was required. He was proposing a national readjustment of the burdens on land by taxing the permanent value of land in order that the taxation on improvements and buildings was to some extent relieved. A great many of them who supported a policy of this kind disliked a great part of the rates upon real property quite as much as hon. Gentlemen opposite. In his view the rates which at the present time, under the ordinary system of assessment, fell upon the improvements put into the land or on the land seemed to him the most vicious and destructive kind of tax they had got. It was impossible to devise a worse tax than that part of the rates which fell upon the improvements put into the land or on the houses built upon the land. The same principle applied in the case of towns in the present taxes on improvements. In towns industries were hampered and houses were fewer because of the high taxes put upon mills and houses. It was just the same in the country where the enterprising farmer or the landlord put capital into the land, for he was mulcted in rates upon his improvements, and this was the reason why the burden of the rates was felt so much.

What they were now asking the House to consider was the placing more and more of the taxation upon the permanent and unimproved value of the land which would not rise in exact proportion to the amount of capital put into the land or to the extent to which it was improved. There was an impression abroad that in proposing this kind of taxation they wished to put a new and larger tax upon the cultivators of the land. He was constantly hearing of what he would call "the finishing touch" argument, which urged that if they put any more taxation upon land they would put the finishing touch to that class of property which was suffering from agricultural depression. He had received a letter from a country gentleman in which he said—

> "I have had this estate thrown on my hands twice over in a ruinous condition, and not being rich enough to incur such heavy losses a third time, I am farming five farms out of six, at a loss, but not so great a loss as the former tenants caused me, owing to the agricultural depression. On the sixth farm, formerly let at £620 a year, I have received less than £200 a year for the last twelve years on the average, besides having had to spend an average of some £60 a year on upkeep. The tithes and rent-charges run away with another £150 a year. If you succeed in imposing another land tax on it, I will get my trustees to make you a present of it if you do not take care. In any case I promise you that my sense of justice will not permit of my paying another land tax, if I have to form a rebellion of only one, nor shall I be altogether passive."

He was sure hon. Members would have respect for that man's sufferings. He did not know all the circumstances, and he did not know what the condition of his estate was, but he might very easily be a man who would very considerably gain by the proposals contained in this Amendment. Supposing his land was really of very much less intrinsic value than a few years ago, and supposing it was the unimproved value that was going down, and he had been putting a good deal of capital into it in order to keep his head above water, he would be a gainer by this proposal, because its object was to try and get taxation taken off such capital which had been put into the land, and if they based the taxation upon the unimproved value, if that land went down in value of course the taxation would be reduced. It seemed preposterous, taking land in Essex, which notoriously was hardly of any value, that rates should be raised on such land to any extent. If land was of no value it ought to have no rates, and if a man came along to spend capital upon it, if he took this useless and valueless land and put money into it, it was very foolish that the nation should put local burdens on him and tax him on the capital value which he chose to put into that land. His object was to exempt that kind of man from taxation.

The other side of the question was where ought the taxation to fall, and whose taxes ought to be increased in order to make up for the remission of taxation in this direction? In no case ought the tax on land which was being put to a good or better use to be increased. If they based taxation more on the unimproved value of land, there were certain classes whose taxes would tend to be increased. There was first of all the landlord who was neglecting his estate—the landlord who was putting no capital into it, allowing bad farming to continue, and letting the value of the land fall, not because the general value was falling, but because he was not working the estate properly. At the present time if an estate fell in value because it was not put to proper use and was not well farmed, the result was that the rates on that estate fell. Who had to make it up? The neighbouring landlords who were working their land well and putting plenty of capital into it. The best criterion for rating was the intrinsic value of the land and not the way in which the land was used. What they wanted to do was to let off as far as possible the landowner whose land was being well used, and, if they liked, to penalise the man who was not using his land well.

Then there was land round towns or villages which was fit for building. He addressed an argument to the House on Friday on the subject of the rating of land values and carried hon. Members with him. At any rate, the Second Reading of the Bill he introduced was carried by a majority of ninety. His argument then went to show that they ought to tax more than they did land on the outskirts of towns which was fit for building on and which was wanted for buildings by the people. There was no magic in the particular boundary line of an urban district or town. Exactly the same was true of villages from one end of the country or the other. There was land round villages which very often would be used for building if it were taxed on its selling value and so brought into the market for building. They were always talking about the condition of housing in the villages. One of the reasons of that condition was the difficulty of getting land, whether by the local authorities or individuals. Then there was land which was wanted for public improvements. Everyone in the House could probably call to mind cases where enormous prices had been paid by corporations in order to get land for, say, waterworks. What ought corporations to pay if they went into some wild district which had been a sheep run? What ought they to pay in reason for land which, until there was a water-supply scheme in prospect, had never had any particular value? Obviously they only ought to pay very little above the agricultural value of the land. But the landlord, owing to his monopoly, was often able to ask eighty or ninety years purchase. That land ought to be taxed on its selling value. That would mean, if public authorities could not get land at reasonable prices, the landlords would have to pay rates on the basis of the selling value. The other day in Northumberland the local authority had to buy land in the neighbourhood of pit villages for schools under the Education Act. The land round about these villages was often going for 1s. 6d. or 2s. a square yard, but the local authority had to pay 5s. a square yard in order to get land to put up schools. If land were taxed on its selling value two things would be done. It would be made easy for local authorities or individuals to get land at reasonable prices, and also to get in the neighbourhood of towns and villages a larger revenue for local purposes. There was land near railway stations which was fit for the purposes of industrial development, but which did not now come into market.

At the present time there was a healthy panic in the country at the fact that we were becoming a town-bred nation, and one of the forms which that panic was taking was the outcry for garden cities, and for having industries in the country instead of the towns. There was only one way in which any large part of the industries could be taken into the country. There was an advantage for almost all our industries in being in towns because of the nearness of communication to the centres of business. There must be some economic compensation to the industries if they were to be taken out of the towns and placed in the country. The only real compensation there could be was that land ought to be cheaper in the country. But what was the case now? Land constantly could not be got in the country by those who wanted to take industries there. If a man wanted a piece of land close by a railway station he was asked a prohibitive price for it; it was a mere chance if he could get cheap land there. If land were rated at its selling price the landlord would not be able to hold it, and when it was wanted for industrial purposes it would be obtainable at a reasonable price. He asked the House to consider whether they ought not rather to do justice than to give charity, whether their chief object ought not to be to remove the real burden upon land, that was to say, the taxation on improvements and everything put into the land, and to tax instead, as could be done with perfect safety, the unimproved value of the land, because that was a permanent factor which could not be altered by anything except the general activity of the population.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'No Bill dealing with the severe burden of the local rates on the agricultural industry will be satisfactory or afford permanent relief which does not provide for a contribution payable by the owners of land based on its selling value, and utilise the fund so provided to relieve the ratepayers of a substantial portion of the burdens which result from the local payment of national services and from the incidence of existing rates on buildings and improvements, instead of adopting the crude and unfair method of paying half the rates on agricultural land out of the Imperial Exchequer' (*Mr. Whitley.*)—instead thereof."

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) said that, as the author of the Bill of 1896, he might be allowed to intervene for a few moments in the debate. The hon. Member for the Elland Division was good enough to say that this Bill was the only thing the Conservative Party had done in ten years for the rural ratepayers of England. Even if the statement were true—and he should be inclined to doubt it—it was not a bad record even after ten years of office. By this one measure alone they had reduced the burden of the rates paid by that particular class 50 per cent. What had the Party opposite ever done to compare with that with regard to this particular class, although they had been in power quite as long as the Conservative Party during the time he had been in the House of Commons? The hon. Member for the Elland Division went on to say that when this Bill was passed it would be the end of Conservative policy in this direction for the present. If he was right in that statement, there was all the more reason for passing this Bill as quickly as they could, for if there was one thing in the world that farmers might be certain of, it was that they would never get anything of this sort from hon. Gentlemen opposite.

He rejoiced to hear the announcement of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition that he was not going to offer opposition to this Bill. He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on that decision whatever he might think of his consistency, and, indeed, he could hardly believe his ears when he remembered the weary hours through which they were kept night after night, and on two different occasions all night, by the most obstructive Opposition that he had ever known during the time he had been a Member of the House of Commons. The right hon. Gentleman had told them that all his objections to the Bill remained as strong as ever they were in the past, which under the circumstances was somewhat surprising. What were these objections? That it was grossly unjust, that it was inequitable, that it could not be otherwise than most ineffective, and that it would be most unfair in its operation, and, lastly, that it was nothing but a dole to the landlords from which the farmers would not benefit by a single iota. If the condemnation of the Bill was true—he denied it at the time and he denied it again to-day—and if those iniquities had been allowed to proceed during a period of nine years, what was it that naturally followed? Why! that the sooner, of course, that these iniquities were repealed the better! To-night the Opposition sang a very different song. What he had understood from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman was, that the doles to the landlords and all the iniquities they had complained of in regard to this Act, had only to be allowed to continue sufficiently long to become virtues instead of the vices which they denounced.

He remembered, as if it were yesterday, the rapturous cheers with which one attack in particular on that side of the House was received by Gentlemen opposite. It was made by an hon. Member who was now a prominent and rising Member of the Liberal Party; he meant the hon. Member for Carnarvon Boroughs. He was not going to detain the House by any long quotations, but would merely give a concrete instance to the House of the iniquities which that hon. Gentleman said would follow from the Bill. That hon. Gentleman stated that taking the rentals of the Ministers, as the authors of the Bill, they would benefit to the extent of £67,000 a year, and he was good enough to tell him that his share would be £700. His own experience was this, that after a permanent reduction in the rental, which had been nearer 70 than 60 per cent., at the very next rent day after the passing of the Bill he had to make a further remission of 10 per cent. in his rents, and on the last rent day he had to make another remission. So much, as a matter of fact, for what had happened to landlords as compared with the amazing fictions of the hon. Member for Carnarvon Boroughs. And all this was being done, said the hon. Gentleman, to relieve the distress of the farmer, the real fact being that the landlord had "bled him to the last drop of his blood." He had had quite recently some opportunities of learning a good deal about the truth of this matter. He happened to be chairman of the Agricultural Committee of the Tariff Commission, and a number of gentlemen had come before them as witnesses from a great number of counties, in England, Scotland, and Wales, selected not by the Commissioners but by the great agricultural societies in the country, and there had been the most remarkable and almost unanimous testimony of opinion he had ever heard before any Committee or Commission, and he had served on many, as to who had been the real recipients of the benefits of the Act. Out of all these witnesses it would be found that, with one or two single exceptions, no one had ever heard of a landlord attempting to intercept the advantages of the Act, and that they had no doubt the farmers had enjoyed them all to the full.

Whether it were the possible approach of the election which had contributed to what he could only describe as this eleventh hour recantation on the part of the Leader of the Opposition; whatever the motive was he thought the right hon. Gentleman was wise, for opposition to the renewal of the Bill just now with an election before them, might, he thought, be a little awkward for a good many hon. Members on that side of the House. Many of those Gentlemen were always professing their desire to do something, to arrest the rural exodus to the towns. "Back to the land" was a leading item in their policy. It was one of their favourite catch cries; what had they ever done to promote it? Nothing that he was aware of, except to bitterly oppose a measure, which at least reduced the rates upon agricultural land by one half; and to denounce it without ceasing ever since. Their Leader moreover declares that they maintain all their old objections to the Bill as strongly as ever. If they do—if they believe in them—if they are sincere—then of course their duty is clear—to do their utmost to defeat it now; which would mean, of course, doubling the rates upon agricultural land, immediately after the Act expires next year. The Member for the Elland Division and the Member for Halifax had Amendments down which, if carried, meant the destruction of the Bill and nothing else. Yet they professed to feel great interest in the welfare of the rural population. Personally, he hoped they would vote for them. The more they voted for them the better; it would teach the people of this country what they would have to expect from some Gentlemen who professed great interest in the welfare of the rural ratepayers of England. It would be a nice cry for them to go to the country with—"Double the rates on agricultural property after March 1st next year."

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY (Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey) said he very much regretted that the hon. Member for Elland had chosen to meet this Bill with a very elaborate and complicated Amendment, rather than simply moving that it should be read a second time that day six months hence. He, himself, held as strongly as ever he did some nine years ago, when the Agricultural Rating Act was first introduced, the cruel wrong and grievous injustice which this Bill did to to a very large section of His Majesty's subjects, viz., all the urban ratepayers and those who lived in populous districts. It seemed to him that that injustice and greivance had been aggravated all the more because this Bill had been originally passed as a merely temporary measure, and it had now become, by its repeated continuance, almost incorporated into the Statute-book of the country. He did not observe any real evidence of any intention, or inclination even, on the part of the Government of dealing further in the future with this great and pressing matter of the reform of local taxation.

The House would pardon him if he referred to the question of rates in towns. Hon. Gentlemen who represented urban districts well knew how heavy and burdensome those rates were. He had ventured to cull the rates imposed on ten or a dozen of the large towns and cities in the country. In Newcastle they amounted to 5s. 2d. in the £; Portsmouth, 6s. 2d.; Bristol and Hull, 7s. 2d.; Cardiff, 7s. 3d.; Liverpool, 7s. 4¼d.; Brighton, Birmingham, and Nottingham, 7s. 6d.; Plymouth, 7s. 7½d.; Manchester, 7s. 8½d.; Leeds, 8s.; Bradford, 8s. 4d.; Southampton, 9s. 5d.; and Norwich, 9s. 7d. He knew full well that hon. Members opposite would urge that regard should be paid to the facilities and advantages which those who lived in large towns obtained from the expenditure of those large sums of money derived from the rates. They pointed out that the ratepayers in towns enjoyed fine main roads, excellent sanitary arrangements, sewage farms, watching and lighting. All these were paid for out of the rates. But he argued that there was no luxury in fine main roads and smooth pavements, no great advantage in complete sanitary arrangements. A sewage farm was not "a thing of beauty and a joy for ever"—although all these things were necessary for the aggregation of population in the towns. He could assure the House that the towns were not very extravagant in spending money on these objects. The expenditure under these heads was not incurred by the municipalities unless it was absolutely unavoidable. They waited until they were absolutely driven and forced by the Local Government Board to make it. He argued again, that towns were called upon, under this Bill, to contribute to make good in rural districts the rates that were formerly levied on the land. It was all very well for the right hon. Member for Sleaford to say that the Agricultural Rating Act had reduced the rates in counties by one-half. Well, were he a rural ratepayer he should think that a most excellent thing; but it had been done out of the pockets of the ratepayers in the towns, who had to pay even higher rates than those in the rural districts. An hon. Member who sat on that side of the House told him the other day that if the people in the towns were idiots enough to pay one-half of the rates in the rural districts, should they not be much greater idiots in rural parts if they did not accept it.

This Bill was founded on a wrong principle. The rates were purely local in their nature and character, and were not national in any shape or form. They were levied in any particular parish, district, or county in order to meet the expenditure of that parish, district, or county, such as for the poor, or for roads or other expenses. They were entirely restricted to that locality and to the district. It followed that the land in itself was rated at too great a figure and that some other property had escaped the fair share of the burden which it ought to bear. That argument, if true, might be no justification for bringing national resources to the rescue of land, but it might be for some rectification of the burdens of rating in the special areas in which those rates were levied. That was the course which ought to be followed. Why should the ratepayers of Leeds, Manchester, or Liverpool be called upon to pay taxably sums of money in order to reduce rates in Andover or rural districts in Devonshire or Cornwall, with which they had no connection or sympathy.

With regard to the allegation that the farmers and occupiers received this benefit, he was inclined to hazard a doubt of it, and if hon. Members would carry their minds back to the state of affairs that existed previous to the passing of the Act of 1896 they would remember that for some weeks before rent day one read in the newspapers, and more especially in those dealing with agricultural subjects, lists of landowners and landlords in various parts of the country who announced their decision to give some abatement or remission on the rents to be paid in the next rental. Those abatements and remissions went up to 25 per cent. But did anyone read now of such abatements? He had consistently read the newspapers, and had not seen for some years past any announcements of that nature. What did it mean but that the tenant was in almost the same position as before? Instead of his relief coming from the landlord, the State stepped in and took on its shoulders those remissions and abatements which previously the landlord had been bound to afford to the tenants in order to keep his land let. Would the tenants be worse off if the House refused to re-enact this measure? He ventured to argue that the landlords and landowners would have to return to their former course and again allow the abatements and remissions as before the passing of the Act. He did not believe that the tenant would suffer in the long run.

They had heard from the right hon. Gentleman an elaboration of the two arguments previously placed before the House by the Chief Secretary for Ireland, who said that in all these rating matters the House should have consideration for two points, viz., ability to pay and service rendered. Those were two new doctrines or gospels of very recent birth; they were formulated to give an air of verisimilitude to an otherwise bald and unconvincing narrative. He agreed that they ought to bring personal property into contribution towards expenditure. His objection was to any piecemeal and partial dealing with the subject. Why should an income of £100 a year obtained from land be treated differently to an income of £100 a year derived from cottages, or a public-house, a corn-mill, or any other business. The right hon. Gentleman could not say that the ability of the land to pay was less, because if it were not able to pay £100 a year, it would pay only £60 or £80. They must take it that the income derived from land was evidence that this land or property was able to pay the amount placed upon it. He suggested, therefore, that the argument of "ability to pay" went by the board. If that part of the argument were not true, the other part of "services rendered" was more ridiculous. Were they going to discriminate among the ratepayers according to the benefits they received? Were they going to have a new classification of property on some sliding scale? If so, they must go further, and not only graduate and classify properties, but graduate and classify the people to whom they belonged. To state either argument was to show immediately the colossal absurdity of both of them. There was no doubt that the effect of the operations of the Act was bad. It was generally allowed that the relief under this Bill went where it was not wanted—to the rich land, instead of to the poor land that ought to enjoy the larger share. It was a re-enactment of the old state of affairs which provided that "to him that hath shall be given, but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath." He ventured to think that, so long as they had the present Party in office, this would be not only the first but the last stage of reform. There was no indication or intention on the part of the Government really and honestly to take into consideration the whole question of the reform of local taxation. If the Government would promise to attempt to deal with this matter in a manner fair and equitable to all classes of property he would support them, but unless they had some such assurance he would not only vote against the Second Reading, but he would oppose the Bill to his utmost ability.

Sir EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.) said he differed from the hon. Member for Halifax in the way in which the hon. Gentleman proposed to remedy the present unfair system of rating. The hon. Gentleman, in the first instance, talked about the unfairness of the present system between farmers and farmers, and in the same breath he talked about a "dole." He had never heard farmers complain that the relief was greater in districts, where the rent was £2 or more an acre, than in districts where it was 5s. or 10s. per acre. Farmers never looked upon this question as a "dole." If they looked upon it as a charity, it would have been right to have given greater relief where the land was the poorest. As regards fresh tenancies his experience had been that not the slightest alteration in rent had been made in consequence of the Act, and he believed all land owners would agree with him in saying that their agents when letting a farm did not for a moment take into consideration the incidence of the Agricultural Rating Act. It was a fallacy to say that the rate had gone into the pockets of the owners, because if that were the fact they would not have the farmers with one voice asking for a renewal of the Act. The farmers declared that the relief went direct to them and not to the owners. If the argument was true that reduced rates meant increased rent, it would be true also as regarded urban rates. The cry in the great cities, as well as in the country districts, was of the excessive burden of local taxation. The occupier was the person who suffered, and not the owner, and it was well known that in towns the higher the rates the higher the rent where rates were compounded. The argument might just as well be employed that it was no use to reduce the taxation on food or on clothing, if it was taxed, because the workmen would just get less wages. Farmers and working men would repudiate any suggestion of that kind.

They were told by the hon. Member for Halifax that his Amendment was based on the principle of relieving agricultural land by taxing land at its unimproved value and without the buildings. The hon. Member for Halifax proposed that they should tax land upon its unimproved value. That was a very startling proposal, for it would mean taxing urban land value for the benefit of rural land. It might be very well from a farmer's or a land owner's point of view, but the hon. Member's proposal would be most unfair to the towns. There was a great difference between the taxation of land values in the town and in the country. As regards the town they would be taxing land which was continually increasing in value, and which it was only right should be taxed to assist in paying for the rates which were spent in the town itself which not only increased the annual value, but the capital value. On the other hand, the capital value of agricultural land was decreasing year by year. He agreed with the hon. Member for Halifax that it would be advantageous if they could have a fair distribution as between owner and occupier in this matter. He was always ready to support any suggestion which would throw on the owner of the land any fair burden which was for the permanent improvement of the land.

Sir Edward Strachey.

As regards the question of what ought to be charged to the Imperial Exchequer which was now placed on local rates, he admitted that the question was one of considerable difficulty. He considered that subsidies were not ideal, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Stirling Burghs expressed the opinion that there ought to be an adjustment and not an increase in them. The Royal Commission on Local Taxation, who had inquired very carefully into the question, had reported, however, that it was not practicable to suggest any other remedy at the present time. If some scheme could be devised to do away with them altogether and so readjust taxation as to have all taxes which were Imperial in their incidence placed on Imperial resources, and all those which were local in their character placed on the localities concerned, it would receive the support of those who thought with him that burdens which were national should not fall on the local rates. Take such matters as the education rate, the poor rate, and the main road rate. In the case of the main roads those who lived in country districts were aware of the enormous expense falling on the rates owing to these roads being used for heavy locomotive and motor traffic—traffic which could not in any way be regarded as local. Then the education rate had increased enormously and had placed an unfair burden on the local ratepayer. It had been said that the idea of placing these taxes on the national Exchequer was impracticable. He thought most of them would favour the granting of relief to the local taxpayer by taking off the unfair burden he was called upon to bear in having to pay out of local rates for national services. There ought to be no distinction between one form of property and another. From whatever source the income was derived every person ought to pay a fair share towards local taxation. He did not see why all these charges should fall entirely on real property and none on personal property. It was, he supposed, because at one time there was very little property except real property to be rated, but if that were so in the past the reverse was now the case. Now there was £160,000,000 a year arising out of real property to bear this burden, whilst there was £340,000,000 a year out of personal property which almost entirely escaped local taxation in regard to those services which were as national in their character as the Army and Navy.

If it were asked how he would tax property derived from, say Consols, he would suggest the possibility of a local income-tax. Such a system had been adopted in several countries. In France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Belgium, Holland, and America personal property was liable to assessment for local taxation, and they had the principle of a single assessment for both local and Imperial purposes, thus getting rid of many inequalities and difficulties. Upon that assessment local taxes were raised on personal property. In France, Belgium, and Holland it was done by a surtax to the rate levied by the State; in some cases the local authorities had power to rate independently personal income for local purposes, while in Austria they went so far as to have a local death duty for educational purposes. The difficulty of localising the incidence in cases when men were domiciled in more than one place was met in some cases by the man who had two residences having to pay on the whole of his income in both places, probably on the principle that if a man was rich enough to have two houses he could afford to pay his local contribution in both places, while in other cases the whole contribution was divided proportionately to the time spent in each place. There were doubtless difficulties in the system, but he believed they could be surmounted. If a system of local income-tax were introduced it would be only fair that the tax should be graduated, and as in Imperial taxation, so that the small ratepayer should pay a smaller amount of rates than the larger one.

As one of those who had always considered that this Act did the right thing in the wrong way, he was glad to hear that the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition did not intend to oppose the Second Reading of the present Continuation Bill. From the agriculturists' point of view he entirely agreed with the right hon. Gentleman's complaint against the delay of the Government in dealing with the matter, but he was not altogether sorry for that delay, because from the sympathetic way in which the right hon Gentleman had spoken, it was evident that the Leader of the Opposition, when he had the opportunity, would attempt to deal with the question in a much more satisfactory way than the present Government had done. He should divide against the Amendment, as he did not believe it was practicable, nor did he for one moment think that the great towns should assent to the suggestion for the pooling of land values for the benefit of agricultural land, as by so doing they would be depriving their own inhabitants of valuable resources for lightening their own heavy rates. The remedy for reducing local rates in town and country was to bring into local taxation property which now escaped such taxation so that the incidence of local taxation might be readjusted on a fair and just basis, and that all forms of property should contribute its fair share.

MR. SPEAR (Devonshire, Tavistock), speaking as a farmer, expressed his gratitude to the Government for bringing forward this Bill, and congratulated them on having to meet a different kind of opposition from that which they had hitherto had to encounter. On the present occasion the objection was not so much to the assistance given to agriculture as to the absence of a larger scheme dealing with the whole question of local taxation. Hon Members on that side of the House felt as strongly as Members of the Opposition the importance, in the interests of the trading community and of the agricultural classes, of a complete rearrangement of the basis of local taxation. The Government had at least shown some appreciation of the necessity for such a rearrangement by proposing to take the first step towards the formation of a new valuation authority. But the argument of the Leader of the Opposition would not be misunderstood by the agricultural community. They would not readily forget that when the Bill was first introduced, and there was no question of the expediency of dealing with the question on a larger scale, the opposition of the Party opposite was directed against the principle which the right hon. Gentleman now admitted was just and equitable.

The hon. Member for the Elland Division had spoken deridingly of the amount of the relief. It might very well have been larger, but if the hon. Member and his friends had had their way the farmer would have been deprived of even the £1,500,000 granted by this Act. As an agriculturist he knew how manfully the farmers had borne up against the depression with which they had had to fight, and it was mockery for the hon. Member to taunt the Government with not having done more. Without this Act British agriculturists would have had to pay during the last nine years from £13,000,000 to £15,000,000 more in rates than they had done. They based their claim for the passage of the Bill not on charity, but on justice. While there had been a slight improvement during the last few years, he believed it was true, as certain statisticians calculated, that agriculturists in this country were receiving for their produce from £60,000,000 to £80,000,000 per annum less to-day than thirty years ago. He also believed that the average agriculturist had not received a penny interest on his capital during the last twenty-five years; he had simply had bread and cheese for his labour, and frequently the labour of his wife and family in addition. Under these circumstances it was not unreasonable to suggest that an industry whose paying powers were so seriously diminished should not be called upon to contribute to local rates so heavily as was justifiable in more prosperous days. He submitted, further, that it was more important to-day that the Act should be renewed than it was in the first instance that it should be passed, because, mainly owing to increased outlay on main roads, there had been a large increase in the rates that had to be paid, with the result that agriculturists were paying as much in rates to-day as before the Act was passed. [OPPOSITION cheers.] Hon. Members opposite cheered, but it had to be remembered that had they succeeded in their opposition agriculturists would have been paying nearly £2,000,000 more to-day than they actually were.

Many objections had been urged against the Act, some in their old form, others in a new dress. Once again it had been said that the landlords would grab all the advantage of the measure. British agriculturists had been grossly insulted by the way in which this matter had been dealt with; they had been treated as though they were paupers instead of Englishmen asking for justice at the hands of Parliament. From his own experience he could say that the prediction that this was a landlords' dole had not been borne out by the facts. If a landlord said to them, "We intend to increase your rent because of the reduction in rates," they would at once point out that notwithstanding the advantage of the Agricultural Rates Act the farmer was earning less to-day than years ago, and, therefore, the landlord would have no ground on the principle of the reduction of rates to increase the rent. When farms were rented for a term of years the landlords readily gave 10 or 15 per cent. remission of rent during agricultural depression, and they readily came forward. Therefore, he did not think landlords were men who were likely to come forward in order to grab that which Parliament meant for the benefit of the tenant farmer.

It was said that this Bill helped the richer farmer as against the poorer farmer, but in his opinion it did quite the reverse, because actually the small farmer got the advantage as against the large farmer. He would show the House how this occurred. The abatement under the Bill was extended to big farmers and to small farmers, and to the occupier of rich land and poor land in like proportion. The abatement was made upon the rateable value of the land, representing the actual value of the land; therefore the advantage, in the first place, was equally enjoyed by the occupier both of good and bad land. The losses incurred by the holders of good land within the last few years had been greater than those sustained by the occupiers of poor land, but he wished to say that while the advantage of the remission was enjoyed equally according to the rateable value of the land, the larger farmer as a contributor to taxation contributed to a fund from which the money was taken to give this remission, and so paid back in taxes part of the advantage he got by the remission of the rates on the land. The smaller farmer was not a taxpayer, and so he put in his pocket the whole of the advantage of this Act, whereas the larger farmer got the advantage, but made a contribution by an increased payment to the taxes.

He appealed to the House to pass this measure first in the interests of the British farmer, and secondly, in the interests of the labourer. Any unjust burden upon the farmer must affect those labourers employed by him. He deplored most sincerely and deeply the movement of the rural population into the towns, but the only way to stop it was to make it better worth while for the rural classes to remain in the country districts, and the removal of unjust burdens from those classes tended in that direction. This was a matter of importance, because they all wanted to see home land developed, and producing the greatest possible amount of food supply which it was capable of producing. The removal of unjust burdens from the agriculturists also tended to the employment of more capital in the cultivation of the soil, and, consequently, it gave more employment to the labourer, and brought greater good to the people, thereby increasing the common wealth. They had heard a great deal said to the effect that this Bill was helping the agricultural community to the injury of the towns, and that house property suffered in consequence. If the Government could have secured a payment to the local bodies of a sum of money from the Imperial Exchequer equal to one-half the rates upon agricultural land the same object would have been achieved. He would like this Act applied to one-acre lots of agricultural labourers. He understood that as this was a continuation Bill that could not be done. Where the expenditure had increased to what it was when the Act was passed the balance did fall upon house property rather than on land, but it fell on the houses and premises of the farmer as well as upon those of anyone else, and, therefore, he did not see that there was much to complain of. He always regretted to hear the town placed against the country, because what was good for the country was also good for the town. He admitted that the ratepayers in towns had grievances, and Parliament every year passed the Poor Law Exemptions Bill which relieved tradesmen of an enormous burden that would otherwise have fallen upon them for the maintenance of the poor. The concession to the towns under that measure was much greater than the concession to the country districts under this Act.

He hoped the Government would introduce a Bill dealing with the rearrangement altogether of local taxation. He thought traders had just reason to complain of the present basis of taxation, and it was high time there was a re-arrangement in the interests of trade and agriculture in the direction of securing that all who had enjoyed local work and the advantages of the outlays made for the convenience and health of the district should contribute alike to the cost of those improvements whether their property was real or personal. This Bill would be received by the agricultural classes with gratitude and appreciation. He assured the House that the farmers had had a keen struggle to meet the liabilities of their position, and they had done it manfully. They had heard of very few bankruptcies. Had it not been for the sympathy of the landlords in allowing reductions of rent, and the Government in granting this remission, he ventured to say that a large number of farmers would have been bankrupt. From the point of view of justice and equity he thought the Government had done right in bringing forward this Bill, and he appealed to the House to pass it simply as a measure of justice to a class of people who were engaged in one of the most important industries of the land.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) said the hon. Member who had just sat down had told them that a reduction of rates was a very good thing for agriculture. He thought that observation was equally true about any other industry; their complaint was not that the Government had reduced rates upon agriculture, but that they had made this reduction at the expense of other industries which were very much more heavily rated than agriculture. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh, oh!"] Surely hon. Members opposite did not mean to say that other industries were not so heavily rated as agriculture? The hon. Member said that he hoped next session the Government would readjust taxation generally, but he noticed that with hon. Members opposite it was always "next session." In 1896 it was stated that this Bill was purely a temporary measure, but they had renewed it once since, and they were now being asked to renew it a second time, and they were simply renewing it as a promissory note to the tradesmen, whilst, at the same time, they were giving the cash to the agriculturists. So long as they confined the relief to one class they must necessarily increase the burden to other classes. Take, for example, the town tradesman and the farmer. He was not going to say that the rates were not very heavy, but they were heavy for all classes. Take, for example, a tradesman paying £100 rent and a farmer paying £100 rent. The farmer would have probably a rate at 2s. 3d. in the £. The tradesman paying £100 rent in a town would probably have to pay a rate of about 6s. 8d. in the £. He thought that was a very fair average for a good many towns, and he knew in some of the towns he represented the rates were higher. The tradesman in this case would be paying £30 a year. What did this Bill mean?

MR. SPEAR said the tradesman's income would be twenty times more than the farmer's.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said if that was the case the hon. Member ought to be fighting not to tax the tradesman but to reduce the rent of the farmer.

MR. SPEAR said that the turnover of the tradesman would be fifty times greater than that of the farmer.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said the hon. Member might know a good deal about farmers, but he did not appear to know much about tradesmen, or he would know the difference between turnover and profit. Did he not know that many tradesmen were struggling just as hard as the farmers? The hon. Member stated that few farmers had gone to the Bankruptcy Court. He wondered if the hon. Member had ever looked through the list of the tradesmen who had absolutely failed to struggle on in their business and had become bankrupt. If the Government had introduced a Bill to deal with everybody—farmer, miller, and manufacturer—nothing could have been said against it. On his side of the House they should probably have voted for it. He objected to one class being singled out of the lot—a class which was not the most heavily rated—and to all the other classes of the community bearing the burden of relieving a class of that character.

It had been said in the course of the debate that this relief had not gone into the pockets of the landlords, and that rates had not gone up. But from observation he knew that remissions of rent had been knocked off in a good many cases. The farmer, after all, was a good business man, and it was perfectly right that he should make the best of this, and claim as much remission as he could in respect of rates. If a landlord attempted to put the rent up because the tenant had had a remission of half his rates, the tenant would say, "The remission we get is one that we are entitled to." Perfectly true, but the hon. Member opposite forgot the other part of the argument. During the last few years the rates had gone up very much, one of the new burdens being in connection with the education rate. Supposing the farmer went to the landlord and said, "My rates are gone up and you ought to make me a remission in rent," the answer was, "Don't you get half rates out of the Agricultural Rates Act?" The farmer did not get the remission he otherwise would have got if this Act had not been passed. The landlord said that the Government were giving £1,500,000 towards the rates of agricultural tenants. Therefore the money had gone already to the landlords in those cases.

He reminded the Government that every time this Bill had come before the House they had promised a general Act dealing with the whole question of local taxation. The Royal Commission had reported fairly unanimously on this subject of local taxation, and how was it the Government had not brought in a Bill to give effect to their recommendations. Local rates were becoming a serious matter. Did the Government really intend to deal with the subject?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: We propose to bring in a Valuation Bill this year.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: The President of the Local Government Board knows that valuation is a very different matter.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: Before any large scheme of local taxation can be undertaken it is absolutely necessary to establish a new valution system.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE said that answer was good enough for the tradesman, the manufacturer, and the artisan, but it was not good enough for the landlord. Why not deal with the matter all round instead of dealing with it piecemeal? The fact was that the Government did not intend to deal with it. This was only one of a series of matters on which they had broken their pledges, and, on the other hand, they had dealt with subjects they were pledged not to touch. They were pledged up to the hilt not to deal with controversial matters. Local taxation was a question which, in 1896, they pledged themselves to deal with, and that pledge was renewed afterwards. They had not dealt with it yet except in a manner which was characteristic of the way in which they had dealt with every subject. Rates were up all round, and the only relief given was in respect of rates on agricultural land. So far from the predictions that were made concerning the effect of this Act when it was originally passed having been falsified, the fact was that they had been justified by experience. One prediction was that parks would come under the definition of agricultural land, and that they would be relieved of half their rates. That was the case throughout the country, although they were not in any sense agricultural land. The landlords had put a few cattle or sheep upon them and had received relief to the extent of half the rates in every county in England and Wales.

Mr. LUKE WHITE (Yorkshire, E.R. Buckrose) said that as the representative of a very large agricultural constituency in Yorkshire, he desired to say a few words in support of the Bill. Some years ago he not only voted but spoke in its favour. If circumstances at that time justified him in taking that course, the position of agriculture to-day was an additional reason why he should support the measure. In considering the Bill they were bound to take into consideration that when the Agricultural Rates Act was first passed its duration was limited in order that Parliament should in the meantime consider and deal with the whole question of local taxation. It was not the fault of agriculture that local taxation had not been dealt with. The onus really lay upon Parliament itself and on the Government for not taking action in the matter. It was absolutely necessary, however, in the interests of agriculture itself, that this measure should be renewed until one Party or the other had the time, in the interests of agriculture, to deal with the whole question. In the meantime local rates had greatly increased. Agricultural land in Yorkshire, although rated at one-half, was now paying nearly as much as was payable when rated at its full value. The Education Act had placed a very heavy burden upon the agricultural interest. It had been stated that the benefits of the Act went to the landlord. He had had considerable experience of the incidence of local taxation since the Act was passed, and he could unhesitatingly say that although here and there they might find the landlord deriving benefit from it, on the whole the benefit went to the farmer and not to the landlord. They might ask themselves who paid the education rate. The farmer paid it and got no recompense from the Government. The farmer would pay that rate for years to come; it was a burden placed upon him and not upon the landlord.

A Royal Commission had considered the practical working of the Agricultural Rates Act and they favoured its principle. But he considered there was great hardship to the farmer in some of its provisions. In some agricultural districts there were urban communities who suffered very much from local taxation. Although agriculture had received the benefit of the Act, there still remained a heavy burden of local taxation of which land should be relieved. The most important feature of the Report of the Royal Commission from the agricultural point of view was the full recognition of the claims put forward by those who represented the agricultural interest. It was clearly shown that a strong case had been made out for considerable relief in addition to the benefits under this Act. In dealing with the readjustment of local taxation there would have to be a clear distinction made between the cost of services which were national and those which were purely local. Those engaged in agriculture were agreed that the expenditure on Poor Law relief, the cost of police, the cost of the maintenance of main roads, education, and other services, ought not to be borne by agriculturists but by the taxpayers generally throughout the country. All who had had any practical experience as to the present basis of the incidence of local taxation were agreed that it urgently needed alteration. Hon. Members had admitted that this measure ought to pass, certainly in the interest of agriculture itself. To his mind, all classes of the population, both in town and country, were interested in the success of agriculture; because, if agriculture was prosperous, then the entire population received considerable benefit. Agriculture stood more in need of this measure to-day than it did nine years ago. He trusted the Bill would pass, and that during the next four years Parliament would have the opportunity of dealing in a comprehensive manner with the whole question of local taxation.

SIR CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford) said that, as a Member for an agricultural constituency, he thanked the Government for having brought in this Bill. It was what the agricultural Members expected of the Government; although they would have liked it better if the Government had gone further. But, he supposed, they must take what they could get. He confessed he could not understand the arguments of hon. Gentlemen opposite. The hon. Member for the Carnarvon Boroughs was always perfectly straight, and he understood what that hon. Gentleman was at; but when his hon. friend came down to Essex to spread the light, if he would only take advantage of the opportunity of going over the land in that county with him, he could show him that this was not a question of rent at all, but a question of getting the land cultivated. He, however, confessed that he could not understand the arguments of the hon. Gentlemen who had moved and seconded the Amendment. He had heard of those who were "willing to wound and yet afraid to strike." So far as he could understand the line these hon. Gentlemen had taken they desired to kill the Bill, and yet they did not. They could not do both. The hon. Member for Halifax told the House that certain members of the Government were themselves not in favour of the original Agricultural Rating Act. He did not move in such exalted circles himself, but he knew that people in that part of the world which he represented were in favour of it.

Of course the Bill was not protection; but in this sphere they had to take what they could get and make the most of it. As Shakespeare said, it was not as deep as a well, or as wide as a church door, but it was enough. He admitted that a Bill of this kind was not an ideal way of dealing with the agricultural industry; but it was the only plan which had been tried. Hon. Gentlemen opposite had not done them the honour to suggest another. The agricultural interest was not satisfied with the present condition of things. What they wanted was to take all the rates off the land; and there was no reason why that should not be done, and, simply, for this reason. When protection was abolished the rates and taxes, for the payment of which protection was given, ought to have been abolished also. Either agriculture was worth preserving or it was not. The only way that agriculture could be preserved was by either relieving the land from rates and taxes, or giving a bounty on corn. If agriculture was not worth preserving, let it go; but if they let it go, he failed to see how they could keep a population on the soil which was to provide men for manning the Army and the Navy; or how the population of the country was to be fed for nine months out of the twelve in the year. If hon. Gentlemen opposite doubted that, let them come to Essex and he would show them where agricultural labourers were doing nothing. Then, if agriculture went by the board and the towns attracted the labourers, the towns might increase in wealth, but they would have an anæmic, narrow-shouldered, stunted people who would not do any good. He was certain of the truth of the lines written more than a hundred years ago that—

> "Ill fares the land, to hast'ning ills a prey,
> Where wealth accumulates and men decay."

That was what they were coming to when the land went out of cultivation.

LORD EDMUND FITZMAURICE (Wiltshire, Cricklade) said there had been a good deal of discussion as to what the immediate effect of the Agricultural Rating Act had been. Had the occupiers or the owners of the land benefited most; or had the one not benefited entirely at the expense of the other? He submitted that it was quite impossible to lay down any general proposition on that question. He thought that this discussion, taken part in by hon. Members from every part of the country, had shown that the effect of this Act, in operation, had been, in some cases, to give a temporary benefit to the occupiers, and, in other cases, a benefit to the owners. He would point out that what his right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition said, in opening the discussion, was that the main reason for opposing the Bill in a former year, when it was first introduced, was that whatever might be the temporary effect of the measure on the tenants, the eventual benefit, owing to the higgling of the market, would fall to the owners. That was one of the most established propositions of political economy, even in these days when free trade had been expelled from this planet and had taken refuge in another sphere. In regard to land, whatever might be the case in towns, the tendency of the rates was to fall on the tenant, and therefore the landlords benefited. In addition to that, as had been pointed out by the hon. Member for Carnarvon Boroughs, in a great number of parts of England, during the bad times after 1874, it was a very common practice on the part of owners not to give a permanent reduction of rent but a temporary. The old rent was kept in existence, and remissions were given from year to year. That being the state of things, in many cases, it was not unnatural for the owner to say that after the burdens on the occupier had been diminished he was justified in going back to the old rent. Therefore, the immediate effect of this Act had been to benefit such owners and not the occupiers of land.

He did not wish to enter into a general discussion on the whole effects of the Agricultural Rating Act; but he wanted to press on the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board to state rather more clearly to the House than he had done the policy of the Government in regard to this great question of rating and the burdens on the land. It appeared to him that in his speech the right hon. Gentleman had adopted a certain Olympian tone and had admitted that this question went back a very long time. Everybody admitted that it was a very great question, and that it demanded to be dealt with by the Government. He hoped the Government would deal with it, and yet the right hon. Gentleman seemed to indicate that the only way the Government meant to deal with it was by renewing this unfortunate Act. The House had good reason to complain of that attitude, because the experience of the past and the necessities of the present showed that this was a most urgent question. When the Government first introduced this question, they said it was necessary to appoint a Roya Commission, and an exceedingly strong Commission was appointed, of the composition of which they, on that side of the House, had no reason to complain. The Government then said that they must wait for the Report of the Royal Commission. The Royal Commission had reported, but in what order? First of all, they made a Report on the very matter which the right hon. Gentleman told the House, correctly, lay at the foundation of this question. They produced a very able and convincing Report on the valuation and assessment of lands as the basis of taxation. The second question dealt with was the rating of tithes; and then came their final Report, not unanimous, but which, nevertheless, contained a very great deal of important and valuable information. There was also a Minority Report. Now, it might have been expected that the Government would have dealt with this question in the order of importance attached by the Commission to the questions raised. But exactly the opposite had been the case. There had been certainly the clamorous interest of the clergy in regard to tithes, and the interest of the owners of land in regard to rates.

The right hon. Gentleman and the Prime Minister told the House that valuation and assessment lay at the root of the whole matter; and so, judged out of their own mouth, they were doing exactly opposite to what they should have done. It was only last year that the Government brought forward a Valuation Bill, but where was it. They saw the Bill of last year, and they were now told by the President of the Local Government Board that there was another Bill in an advanced state of preparation. The right hon. Gentleman also alluded to the Bill of last year. He (Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice) supposed that Bill was in an advanced stage of decomposition. That might be so or not, but they wanted to know where was the Bill of the present year. Was there any serious intention of dealing with this question at all, or was it only a shop-front Bill? He agreed that the question of valuation was at the root of the whole subject. Some of them were too much disposed to devote the whole of their time to the question of rating of site values, and did not attach sufficient importance to the organisation of the valuation authorities of this country. If they took the proposals of the hon. Member for Halifax and of other hon. Gentlemen, by their own showing, if their Bills became law to-morrow, it would be a considerable time before any large sums of money would accrue from those Acts and find its way into the pockets of the ratepayers. The Bill of the hon. Member for the Elland Division only dealt with houses and lands when the leases fell in, and therefore *ex hypothesi* it would be a considerable time before that Bill would bring any large amount of money into the pockets of the ratepayers.

In regard to the existing law of valuation he was astonished that the Government, having had the Commission's Report on valuation for some years, and having admitted that it lay at the very root of the question, had not only played with the subject last year, but were apparently going to play with it this year. He agreed that a Bill of this kind could not be carried by a wave of the hand. He recollected when some twenty years ago Mr. Sclater-Booth held the position now occupied by his right hon. friend there was a Government Valuation Bill every year, and every year it broke down by reason of the jealousy between the local rating authorities and the surveyors of taxes. Since then the county councils had come into existence. The figures in the last Report of the Local Government Board showed that a large proportion of the rates were levied by the county councils as distinct from the boards of guardians. They now had to deal with three authorities. First there was the surveyor of taxes with regard to the Government taxes; next there was the existing local rating authority with regard to the rates which they still levied; and then there was the county council, which was becoming more and more the governing authority in county boroughs. What a humiliation it was to the Government that after so many years, after the Reports of the Royal Commission, and after having all these Bills they were now no nearer to a settlement of this question than they were in the days of Mr. Sclater-Booth. Was it not possible to make the appeal to the Government that they were losing authority and their reputation by appearing to play with this question, which was admittedly of such immense importance. Everyone who had anything to do with the subject knew the great difficulties that beset it, but he was most anxious that some effort should be made to deal with it, because he felt that whatever Government or Party might be in power that question must be dealt with first. The reputation of the House was involved in dealing with and settling this question which had been a failure ever since the days of Mr. Sclater-Booth.

*MR. ERNEST GRAY (West Ham, N.) cordially agreed with what the hon. Member who just sat down had said. It certainly was not creditable to this House that, though from the early sixties Governments from both Parties had declared that the reform of local taxation was an urgent question, yet both had persistently pushed it aside. He desired to approach this subject from the point of view of that class of district which would be called upon to pay heavily, and which would receive from this Bill no benefit whatever, or if it received any benefit it would be very small and very indirect. He denied that in this matter the country was in the same position as it was nine years ago when the original Bill was passed, or even four years ago when it was renewed. He remembered the promises that were made by the Government when the first Agricultural Rating Bill was passed; the declaration daily and nightly made by the Government that this was a temporary expedient to meet a case of urgent necessity, and that the whole question of local taxation would, at an early date, be grappled with by the Government. Then came the Royal Commission and it was a reasonable thing at that time to vote for the Bill, and a great many urban Members did vote for it, largely in the hope that the promises made by the Government at that date would be fulfilled without any serious delay. In 1901 the Royal Commission had reported, and again he recollected the promises made by the Government when the Tithe Rent Charge Bill was taken up, when the House was again told that this also was an urgent matter, and should be dealt with without delay. Were they, he asked, in the same position as they were four years ago in regard to this matter? Had not the interest in this question of local taxation receded rather than advanced? Was the interest of the Government or the House as keen now upon the question of local taxation as it was when the Royal Commission reported? He very much doubted whether instead of having made progress the interest had not receded until it had almost reached a vanishing point.

Let the House consider for a moment the burdens of the urban districts and compare them with those of the rural districts. The burdens borne by the urban districts were much greater than they were ten years ago, and they had grown with much greater rapidity in the urban than in the rural districts. This was illustrated by the effect of the Education Act of 1902, which had placed far greater burdens on the ratepayer and the taxpayer. Where had that burden fallen most heavily? Where had the relief given by Parliament been the least felt? There were less than one dozen rural districts where the education rate came to 1s. in the £., but there were a considerable number of urban districts where it exceeded 2s. How could he, representing an urban district where the education rate alone amounted to nearly 3s. in the £., support this Bill? He would be told, no doubt, that a different method of assessing the rate prevailed as between urban property and agricultural land; but even admitting that that was the case, there was one instructive illustration of the difference, namely, that whereever a man could move his residence from an urban district into an administrative county he went without the slightest hesitation. He would leave his factory, his business, or occupation, whatever it might be, in the urban district, but would move his residence without the slightest hesitation into the administrative county, and the reason given nine times out of ten was the heavy burden of the local rate in the urban district compared with the much lighter burden which fell upon him in the administrative county.

What were the rates it was proposed to relieve by this Bill? They were all the rates levied on agricultural property. That was not following out the recommendation of the Commission; what the Commission recommended was that those charges which were national in their character should be paid out of the Imperial Exchequer, and that those which were local in their character should be paid out of local taxation. The whole of the charges on agricultural land were not national in their character, but when it came to a question of education and the poor rate, those were certainly national in their character, and the burden of them should not be so largely local as it was to-day. The debate of to-day, together with the debates of four and nine years ago, ought to teach the lesson not merely that the question of assessment and taxation had to be dealt with, but that it never would be satisfactorily settled until the basis of taxation had been considerably enlarged. Difficulty was found in imposing local rates, and schemes were put forward for bringing different kinds of property into the net of local taxation. There was a steadily growing desire that a large portion of the national charge now borne by local rates should be thrown upon national taxation, but every year the Chancellor of the Exchequer had to admit that if any such relief was to be given it would be necessary either to increase the burdens upon certain sections of the community or considerably to enlarge the area of national taxation, and no one who had followed the debates of the last ten years could doubt that it was to the latter of those alternatives resort would have to be had to provide the central Exchequer with means sufficient to discharge national obligations without falling back on the local ratepayers. As the representative of a constituency where rates had enormously increased, he could not but admit that the position had materially changed during the last nine years. The prospect of relief appeared to be vanishing rather than approaching. Under the Education Act of 1902 necessitous districts which previously obtained relief had had that relief swept away, and in its stead there had been set up a system under which assistance was given to districts where it was hardly needed, while districts which more than ever required relief lost much of that which they formerly had and were now called upon to continue this subsidy to districts which were really better off in the matter of local rating than the urban districts themselves. Under these conditions he could not see his way to vote for the Second Reading of the Bill.

*Mr. PERKS (Lincolnshire, Louth) said that he was one of the few Liberal Members who, in 1896, voted and spoke in favour of the Agricultural Rates Act, not because he was enamoured of the economic principle which underlay the Act, but as an expression of the gratitude of his constituency for the generosity of the authors of the measure to the depressed agriculturalists. He agreed that agriculture did not now present the altogether hopeless spectacle of fifteen or twenty years ago, but, at the same time, it could not afford, at any rate in his Division, to renounce the benefaction which Parliament offered to it. Remembering the strong language used to him in the House, and the still stronger language used in the lobby for the vote, he felt it his duty to give in in 1896 he could only congratulate the Leader of the Opposition that he had, for reasons he had explained, decided to support the measure on the present occasion—although the right hon. Gentleman had been careful to state that he did not approve of the principle of the Act. It might be remarked further that nearly every

Liberal who had been returned for a county constituency during the last few years had previously declared himself in favour of the Agricultural Rates Act.

He was not a believer in the doctrine of grants in aid from Imperial funds for local objects. The system had already been pressed far beyond reasonable limits, and it certainly conduced to waste and extravagance in the imposition and administration of local rates. Some of his hon. friends had given admirable, and, to some extent, lucid expositions of their views in reference to future rating legislation. It was possible that the time would come when a reconstruction of the whole system of local taxation would have to be considered, and he agreed that it would never be done by a mere shuffling of the cards as between agricultural and town property. There was reasonable ground of complaint, in his judgment, on the part of the large farmer class, as to the method in which they were assessed compared with the shopkeeper in the country town. The shopkeeper who paid perhaps £25 or £30 rent was probably making a larger income in that small shop than the neighbouring farmer who was cultivating 300 or 400 acres of land, and not only had to bear that burden, but probably had to invest £5,000 or £6,000 capital compared with the £200 or £300 invested in the stock of the country shopkeeper earning an equal income. That was a ground of complaint between these two classes of ratepayers. He was not concerned to inquire upon whom ultimately this burden rested, but he adopted the view of his right hon. friend that the benefit of the relief in the last resort unquestionably went to the freeholder. It must be so because every political economist asserted it. Assuming this doctrine to be true, although objectionable, that the freeholder was the man who benefited, he wished to point out that in his division there were 1,000 of this class who were the owners and occupiers and farmers of holdings varying in acreage from ten or fifteen acres up to 100 acres, and he was bound to have some regard to what they thought in regard to the working of this Act.

He did not know what form future legislation on this point would take, and he was not concerned to inquire about it; they might have to discover some method of ascertaining the selling value of freehold land, and base all future local taxation upon the selling value. He observed that by an extraordinary process of reasoning in the treatise sent out as a Parliamentary Paper by the opponents of this Bill, there were two branches of property which his hon. friends thought would never get any relief, and they were the public-house and the railway. He would pass away from that thorny point. The relief might come by bringing into the net for local taxation personalty as well as realty. He had a friend in a manufacturing district near Zurich, who told him he had to pay local taxation upon the whole of his stock, machinery, and manufactured articles in his great mills. He had another friend not far away from him who was a professional man. He was a doctor earning over £500 a year, and he had to pay away to the extent of one-third of his income over that sum in local and general taxation, and even his books and surgical instruments were valued for the purpose of ascertaining what he should pay. He did not know whether that would be the basis of taxation in the future, but he should support this Bill, not because he believed in its principle, because he did not believe in the principle of relief to local taxation upon which the Bill was based. He supported it, because it was a generous gift from the urban constituencies so largely represented on the other side of the House, to agricultural constituencies, and it was on that account that he supported it in 1896.

Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) said hon. Members opposite, and even his hon. friend who had just sat down, twitted some of the Opposition with not opposing the Bill on this occasion, whereas they had opposed it in the past. The hon. Member for Louth had further twitted the Leader of the Opposition with not approving the principle of the Bill. What was the principle of the Bill? His hon. friend himself did not approve of the principle of the Bill. Was the principle of the Bill that one class only should be helped, or was it not? Nobody who had studied the question or read the Report of the Local Taxation Commission could deny that the agricultural interest required, under certain conditions, relief in the matter of the rates. If that was the principle of the Bill the Opposition did not oppose the principle; but what they did oppose, what they continued to protest against, was that one interest should have been picked out and treated with every favour, whereas other interests, deserving a large relief, had not been dealt with. He was glad that they on the Opposition side were not opposing in any very whole-hearted way at any rate, the passing of this particular measure on this occasion. When a Bill like this had been in force for some years, when a class of men—farmers, landowners, or whoever it was—had had a benefit under the Bill for a number of years, when it was generally conceded that they ought to have some benefit, then it was very difficult to take such benefit away.

They were considering at the present moment the Amendment of his hon. friend the Member for Halifax. He did not know whether he was present in the House at that moment. If he were he would appeal to him to withdraw the Amendment, or at any rate not put the House to the trouble of a division upon it. He did not think the Amendment quite expressed his hon. friend's desires; at any rate it was certainly not in accord with the speech of the hon. Member for the Elland Division who seconded, because he spoke of "a contribution payable by the owners of land based upon its selling value." But the whole of his speech—as he understood it—was that it was to be the unimproved selling value of the land, whatever that might be. If that was the case it ought to be expressed in the Amendment. He wished to make it clear why it was that some of them, whilst not going to any great length in opposition to this Bill, nevertheless felt strongly the gross injustice of it. His constituency was in the same position as that of the hon. Member for West Ham, and he fully sympathised with the speech he had made. Rates were extremely high. The education rate was mounting up to 2s., and the effect of the Education Act of 1902 was not to benefit his constituency but to do it harm. Their urban rates were higher. They were advancing much more quickly than rates in the rural districts, and the burden of those local rates on the great manufacturing industries was enormous. This case was made infinitely worse by the extreme injustice of the distribution of Imperial subventions at the present time. Some hon. Members opposite who supported this Bill seemed to think of only one kind of injustice, and that was the injustice to the agricultural class under the old conditions of rating. But there was a tremendous injustice at the present time to constituents like his in the present distribution of Imperial subventions. If the amount received from the Imperial Treasury were divided according to the principle favoured by Sir Edward Hamilton and Sir George Murray, and approved by Lord Balfour of Burleigh, then the extra amount his constituency would receive would be between £20,000 and £25,000 per annum, representing a rate of 1s. to 1s. 3d. in the £. That being the case, was it not a great injustice to his constituents that they should be asked, as they were, nine years ago, not only to go on suffering that injustice, but also to pay their share of the subvention to the agricultural class. If his constituency paid its proportionate share of the £1,750,000 or whatever it was, the share of his constituency amounted to from 2½d. to 3d. in the £. At page 119 of the Report of Sir Edward Hamilton and Sir George Murray he found a statement showing the disparities in regard to local rating in certain agricultural counties and county boroughs, one of the county boroughs being Oldham. Further down on the same page was the following—

> "Accordingly in order not to overstate the case we take 'assessable value' as defined by the Agricultural Rates Act, *i.e.*, rateable value after deducting half the value of agricultural land. Even on this test, Rutland still is more than twice as rich as Oldham—that is to say, if a local service costs 1s. per inhabitant alike in Rutland and in Oldham, it will need a rate of almost 4d. in Oldham and only 1¾d. in Rutland, even when agricultural land is rated at a half. Notwithstanding this disparity in ability, Oldham only receives help to the extent of 2s. 7d. per inhabitant, while Rutland receives 6s. 8d. or more than twice as much."

That statement showed how hardly treated his constituency was in this matter, and that would continue until there was a complete reform of the system on which subventions were given from Imperial sources. Could it be wondered in view of the facts that complaints were still made in regard to doles given to favoured classes? He regretted that as years went by no attempt was made to deal with this great question of the reform of local taxation. For ten years the Government had had an enormous majority. They certainly had had sufficient leisure to deal with this question. They had had some surpluses, and he thought that instead of giving the country the Acts which had been passed since 1900, to which the Opposition strongly objected, they might have devoted part of the time to making a great reform, in which hon. Members on his side would have been only too glad to help them, and which would have redounded to their credit in future years.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY (Devonshire, Honiton) associated himself with the expressions of regret which had fallen from hon. Members that this question had been allowed to drag on for a considerable time without any substantial reform being undertaken. He agreed that urban districts had a grievance in regard to the postponement of the reform of local taxation. The sins of omission and commission of the present Government had been very much dwelt upon by Members of the Opposition, and he could only hope that during the time still left to them the Government would do a great deal to repair their sins of omission so that they could go to the country with a good record. At the same time he congratulated the Government upon this act of simple justice in preserving to the agricultural interest the benefit which they had enjoyed with advantage to themselves and the whole community for the past nine years. He also congratulated the Opposition on their tardy repentance, which enabled them, now an election was in view, not to subject the House to an all-night sitting while they opposed the passage of the measure. The inequality of rating between those who enjoyed an income from personal property and those who derived their income from real property was so glaring that Parliament had admitted that the case called for special and preferential treatment. The tradesman and the professional man paid rates only on the premises they occupied, whereas the agriculturist was rated on his whole income. He would give two instances to show what the hardship was for which this relief had been asked. In the Report of the Commission on Agricultural Depression it was stated that Mr. Wilson Fox, a farmer, the rateable value of whose holding was £1,050, paid income-tax on £506, and was assessed for poor and highway rates £157 12s. 1d. A tradesman adjoining the farm had premises the rateable value of which was £50, and he paid income-tax on £600, but only £13 for poor and highway rates. There was another case in Somersetshire where a manufacturer, employing 2,000 men, was rated for local purposes on £200, while a farmer in the same parish was assessed on £460 and paid more in local rates than the manufacturer.

MR. EMMOTT: That is a very unusual thing.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY said it was a very serious injustice; and his desire was to see the inequality in the way in which rates were levied between town and country done away with. He thought it was fair to put forward a special claim for the agricultural interest for consideration in these times. When the Corn Laws were repealed the advantages which the agricultural interest had hitherto possessed were withdrawn, and he submitted that the damage done to the agricultural interest ought to have been met by a reduction in the rating at that period. Time had been allowed to slip by, the injustice had remained, and the unfair treatment of the agricultural interest had been patiently borne, and would have continued but for this Act. What the agricultural interest asked for was only equity and justice. They would be very glad if this Act were made permanent and not temporary, because they would be free from the danger of its not being renewed when hon. Gentlemen opposite came into power.

Mr. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple) said that although he should vote for the Second Reading of the Bill he did not feel grateful to the Government for proposing it, because he looked upon it as, to a very considerable extent, a landlords Bill. He believed that the benefits of the Act went very largely to the landlord. He represented an agricultural constituency, and had talked with farmers, valuers, and land agents, and that was the position which fair-minded men took up in regard to this measure. They said that in the majority of cases in which there had been a reletting of a farm, or in which the farm had been revalued for rental purposes, it was the landlord and not the tenant who got the benefit of the Act. But, having regard to the fact that this Act had been in force since 1896, and that large numbers of contracts had been made on the faith of it, that reletting and revaluation for rental purposes had been made during that period, he considered it would be unfair not to continue the Act. One proof that the benefit of the Act went to the landlord was the Answer given by the President of the Local Government Board to a Question which he had put to the right hon. Gentleman. He asked the right hon. Gentleman if he would provide in the Bill that in every case the benefit should go to the tenant ; but the right hon. Gentleman refused to do so. That was a very strong proof that the Government meant the benefit of the Act to go to the landlord and not to the tenant, and if the Government had not thought that the benefit would ultimately go to the landlord they would not have been so anxious to pass this Bill. If it had been a Bill giving tenants full compensation for improvements and security of tenure the Government and their supporters would have voted against it, but when there was a Bill in which the benefits conferred went to the landlord, hon. Members opposite went tumbling over each other to support it. The right hon. Member for Sleaford had said that when rents were high rates were low, and that when rates were high rents were low. That showed that when a rating benefit was given to the tenant the landlord was sure to get it ultimately for himself. The hon. Member for Tavistock spoke as if landlords were angels without wings, and yet he said in another sentence that no tenant during the last twenty years in his neighbourhood had made more than bare bread and cheese.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING

SWANSEA CORPORATION BILL

(By Order).

Order for Consideration, as amended, read.

Sir GEORGE NEWNES (Swansea Town) said the works to which this Bill referred were of a permanent character, and it was of the greatest importance that sufficient time should be given to relieve the ratepayers of some of the liability. One of the most important obligations that could be put upon those responsible for municipal government was the supply of pure water for the municipality. Having carefully considered the question the Corporation of Swansea had provided not only for the Swansea of to-day, but for the Swansea, as it would in all probability be, in the future. The Swansea Corporation had in this acted wisely; they had provided for at least five generations, and the gist of his Amendment was that one generation should not be asked to pay the whole of the expenditure. If that were done it would be a very serious matter for the people of Swansea at the present time. It would add over £5,000 a year to their rates, which would mean a 3½d. rate unless this Amendment was accepted. There was no greater stickler for the integrity of municipal finance than himself, and he would not have proposed this Amendment except for the permanent character of these works, which would last not for the one generation which was asked to pay for them, but certainly for five or six, and probably a great many more. It might be said that the works had cost considerably more than the original estimate, but there was nothing unusual in the cost of public works exceeding the estimate for them, and he pointed out that in this case the extra cost had not been a waste of money because it had been caused by the fact that the corporation had been compelled to undertake the cost of supplying all the intervening area between the reservoir and Swansea—a distance of some twenty-eight miles—and that itself involved putting down another twenty-four-inch pipe line at a great cost, so that value had been obtained for the extra money spent, for the repayment of which the House was now asked to give an extension of time. To give sixty years was not exceptional. Manchester, Liverpool, and Birmingham were all granted sixty years in which to pay off the loans they contracted for a similar purpose, while in the case of London 100 years were given. Those were the simple facts of the case. He had no desire to weary the House further, but would now only appeal to hon. Members to support the Amendment, assuring them that if this Amendment was not carried a very great injustice would be done to that great community which he had the honour to represent. He begged to move.

Mr. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea District) said he rose to second the Amendment. This Amendment was really an appeal from the decision of a Committee of that House. The question before that Committee was a simple one. It was not opposed, except by the Swansea Tramways Company, Limited. Their opposition was duly heard, and the question settled in favour of the corporation. The Bill then passed through Committee, and it was now under the consideration of the House. The Corporation of Swansea did not ask the House to go behind the Report of the Committee except on one simple question, which was the terms upon which the Corporation of Swansea should have a right to raise a sum of £270,000 to complete the great undertaking to which his hon. friend had done such ample justice—an undertaking authorised by Parliament in 1892. The Committee had given borrowing powers to the corporation to the extent of £270,000, subject to the conditions that the loan must be repaid within thirty years. The corporation asked that the time of repayment should be extended over a period of sixty years. The period originally named in the Bill was sixty years. The Local Government Board reported that that period should be reduced to thirty years, and the Committee accepted that recommendation. The Amendment was in the nature of an appeal from the decision of the Committee. There were no questions in dispute. The matter was one not of fact but of opinion. This, though it might appear to be a small question, was more important than it looked. This was a question which affected all the municipalities of the United Kingdom, and it was not right that a hard-and-fast line should be taken by the Local Government Board as to the limit of time for repayment. In determining the period the two elements that ought to be taken into account were, firstly, the financial position of the corporation, and secondly, the character of the purposes for which the money was to be borrowed. These two tests were amply satisfied by the borough of Swansea.

In regard to this Bill, he would point out that there was no question of municipal trading involved. The supply of water was one of the primary duties of every corporation. In 1892 a plan was laid before Parliament and passed with practically no opposition. In its main outline it was an accurate, well-ascertained plan. In some respects the estimates of the engineers had not been fulfilled, but in dealing with great undertakings, notwithstanding the best advice, it was impossible that no anticipation should be falsified. But the reservoir was of a permanent character and would last for many generations. It would suffice for treble the existing population and also for the discharge of the obligation under which the corporation had been put to supply the populous centres which were gradually rising between the reservoir and Swansea itself, which had grown more densely populated as time went on. The only other point that he wished to put was why had this question about sixty years and thirty years been raised at this late period of the undertaking. In 1892 no objection was raised on the part of the Local Government Board to the repayment of these borrowed sums being extended over a period of sixty years. He could have understood the objections if the Corporation of Swansea had sought for new powers. It might then have been said that sixty years was too long a period, but once having allowed them to embark on a great enterprise, why at the last moment was this alteration made in the term for repayment? He did not think there was any occasion for the Local Government Board to take up a strong position on this matter. Their request was not unreasonable, and in the hope that it would be acceded to by the Government, or at any rate by the House, he begged to second the Amendment.

Amendment proposed to the Bill—

"In page 13, line 18, to leave out the word 'thirty,' and insert the word 'sixty'—(*Sir George Newnes*)—instead thereof."

Question proposed, "That the word 'thirty' stand part of the Bill."

MR. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye), as Chairman of the Committee, felt bound to explain the reasons which actuated the Committee in the line they had taken. His hon. and learned friend had left out of sight the statement which had been circulated among Members of the House, and which related to previous loans granted to Swansea for its waterworks. When he looked at that statement he noticed that in 1892 the Corporation of Swansea was empowered to borrow £270,000 to be repaid in sixty years. In 1898 they again approached the Local Government Board and were allowed to raise a further loan of £100,000, on the condition that it should be repaid in thirty years. It followed, therefore, that the attitude of the Local Government Board with regard to the shorter term of repayment was adopted as far back as 1898.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES pointed out that the undertaking was originally entered upon on the basis that the money required would not have to be repaid under sixty years.

MR. STEVENSON said in 1902 a further loan of £71,000 was granted on a term of repayment extending over sixty years. In the present year an application was made for £250,000 to be raised, and the Committee decided that the period of repayment should be thirty years. These loans for the Swansea waterworks amounted to £691,000, as compared with the original estimate of £270,000. He did not complain that there should have been so great an excess over the original estimate, because undoubtedly one-half of the present loan was in respect of the new pipe line. They found that out of the total of £691,000 a sum of £341,000 was repayable within sixty years, whilst £350,000 had to be repaid within thirty years. Taking those amounts together, it appeared that Swansea was borrowing money for its waterworks on terms of repayment averaging forty-five years, and the question which the House had to decide was whether forty-five years was not a sufficiently long period to be allowed in a case of this kind. Previous attempts had been made, but without success, to get the period of thirty years extended in relation to the £100,000 borrowed in 1898.

Dealing with the £250,000 present loan, he found that about one-half of the amount represented excesses over previous estimates, due partly to miscalculations and partly to requirements shown to be necessary. The other half related to the new pipe-line, and they had to consider what was likely to be the length of life of that pipe-line. Although the engineer's evidence gave the life as likely to last from sixty to 100 years, other Committees had had before them similar evidence which had not given anything like so long a term. Then what changes were there in the development of Swansea or the growth of its population which induced them to put forward in the present year the demand for a loan of £250,000, when, in October of last year, they only asked for £125,000. The reply which had been given to that question was that some time ago there was a depression of trade and some uncertainty as to the future, but owing to the recent advance in the tinplate trade and to other circumstances Swansea was never more flourishing than it was now. The Committee did not for a moment desire to deny the utility or value of the second pipe line which might be needed in the future, and they had inserted a clause in the Bill to enable Swansea to supply water to other authorities in the district on terms to be arranged which would recoup them for the expenditure thus incurred. He agreed with the seconder of the Motion that a question of this kind went behind the special merits of the Swansea case, and he ventured to think that unless very especial circumstances were shown why the minimum period should be departed from. it was not desirable or in the general interest of municipalities that this period of repayment of loans should be extended. It was deemed advisable to have a speedy reduction of our national burdens, and surely it would be undesirable to apply to municipalities a different standard to that which was applied to national finance. He had very considerable doubts whether a case had been established in favour of the longer period of repayment for Swansea, as he had pointed out that by taking the loans together the average term was forty-five years. At the same time he did not think that the decision of the Committee should interfere with the free expression of opinion of the House of Commons, and for his own part he was quite willing that the decision should be either reversed or confirmed by the House.

*MR. ALLHUSEN (Hackney, Central) recited the water history of Swansea. In 1892 they asked Parliament for powers to borrow £270,000 in order to make waterworks, a pipe line, and a reservoir. In 1898 they asked for another £100,000, and in 1902 for a further £71,000 for the purpose of completing works originally sanctioned in 1892 making a total sum of £441,000. Then in 1905 they asked Parliament for a further sum of £125,000 for the purpose of completing the works originally sanctioned, so that in the course of thirteen years, during which time the works were being proceeded with, and the water consumers of Swansea had had no water from the new works, the amount of money sanctioned by Parliament had risen from £270,000 to £566,000. It was difficult for the Committee to arrive at an absolutely right judgment of the matter when the Bill was entirely unopposed, because they had to sit as judges, and at the same time find out the whole facts of the case for themselves. The Committee did their very best to arrive at a right decision. They were helped by the evidence given by a gentleman representing the Local Government Board, and he could not help feeling that in such a case it would be of very great advantage if the Local Government Board were to be represented by counsel who could cross-examine the promoters of the Bill for the benefit of the Committee, and thus relieve them from the dual position of cross-examiners and judges. The water debt of Swansea would, with the addition of this £250,000 loan, be increased to £836,000, which would be a very heavy burden on the ratepayers, for whom he could not help feeling a great deal of sympathy. This was rather a question which affected the future decisions of Committees, and it seemed to him that a case had not been made out for granting a period of sixty years for the repayment of all excess moneys required in addition to the original loan. The corporation had to admit that they had exceeded their original estimate three times; it had been increased by over 100 per cent., and it was too much to ask the House to now sanction repayment of these additional sums over a period of sixty years. The real question at issue was whether the House intended to do anything at all to check excessive municipal borrowings and to put some drag on extravagant expenditure. In this case the Committee arrived at the very best decision on the evidence before them, and nothing had been said by hon. Gentlemen opposite to alter his opinion that the average term of forty-five years for repayment of this large debt was a very fair condition.

*MR. HIGHAM (Yorkshire, W.R., Sowerby) pointed out the great difficulty under which corporations and other local authorities laboured when they had to meet these variable and erratic decisions of the Local Government Board. Here was an instance, he said, where for the same waterworks, and for the same class of work, in 1892 the Board granted sixty years, in 1898, only thirty years, in 1902, again sixty years, and in 1905, now thirty years for the larger sum. It was impossible for a municipality to discuss and consider its schemes, and to prepare its undertakings, with such variable decisions before it. He did appeal to the House to extend this period to sixty years. The difference between that time and thirty years meant, in the event of a loss in working the undertaking, an addition of 3½d. in the £ to the rates of the borough, and in the event of a profitable undertaking, it meant that for the next thirty years the ratepayers had to pay a much enhanced price for their water, so that their successors could have it for next to nothing. There was a great outcry throughout the country about the heavy increase in rates, and here was a case where a 3½d. addition was being deliberately forced on a municipality by the Local Government Board. As an illustration of the irregular methods of exercising pressure adopted by that Department, he mentioned an instance where it fell to his lot to be one of a deputation waiting upon a President of the Board a few years ago. It was in connection with the filtration of the sewage of a public authority, and the Board had intimated that the local authority must have land for filtration purposes. The corporation pointed out that all the land available—in fact all the land of the district was of a clay subsoil, and perfectly useless for the purpose. The Board replied, "It does not matter, we shall insist on your obtaining land," and the corporation's answer to this was that there was no legal power to compel them to buy land. The President of the Local Government Board acknowledged that this was so, but added that they would force them to buy land by stopping all their other borrowing powers till they did it, although, he said in addition, if they agreed to buy the land they would not compel them to use it. He put it to the House whether that was a fair or reasonable way for a great Department to exercise its powers, and in another direction was not this pressure upon Swansea another illustration of the Board's unreasonable requirements? Year by year, water authorities found it necessary to go greater distances for their supply. The schemes became more and more costly, and naturally were being made to supply greater areas, and to look further ahead. In many cases, expenditure did not really become fruitful for ten or twenty years. Water was a prime necessity, and it was doubly important that it should be both plentiful and cheap. Would it not be wise, therefore, to give the longer period for repayment? If a corporation bought up an existing waterworks, the Department made no difference in its financial treatment, and if in the case of a works —reservoirs, etc.—already fifty years old, it was wise to give fifty or sixty years for repayment, surely it was most reasonable to ask for the longer period in the case of constructing new works. The pressure upon present ratepayers to pay off the capital cost of waterworks for the benefit of a coming generation was altogether too heavy, and this was especially apparent when they remembered that these works were never destroyed or cast aside. They were extended or added to, but they always retained their utility. He had the greatest sympathy with the demands for short periods of time for the repayment of loans in cases where the municipalities went in for purely commercial undertakings, but water supply was a matter of life and death, an absolute necessity, a case in which a corporation must spend money for posterity, and he submitted to the House that the sixty years asked for was not too long a period. He therefore supported the Amendment to alter thirty years to sixty years.

MR. ROSE (Cambridgeshire, Newmarket) said the motives which made him, as a member of the Committee, unwilling to consent to an extension of the period of the loan, or to a period of sixty years for the additional money required, were those of financial prudence and a desire to restrict excessive municipal borrowing, feeling as he did that if a period of sixty years was allowed it might be an incentive to over-borrowing on the part of municipalities, whereas the shorter period would certainly conduce to greater caution. As to the suggestion that gross injustice might be done to certain classes of the community by the imposition of the larger rate necessary to repay the loan in the shorter period, one of the chief arguments in favour of the Bill was that the works were rendered necessary by the great prosperity of trade in Swansea. The tinplate trade was said to be enjoying unexampled prosperity in Swansea, and that being so the class concerned could hardly object to the imposition of the additional rate.

Sir WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston) said that while he sympathised with the desire to keep municipal expenditure within judicious bounds, he thought that if there was one province more than another in which the House should be extremely careful how such restrictions were applied, it was in that concerning the public health of the community. Borrowing for such purposes ought to be encouraged rather than checked, for economy in that direction was the worst possible economy that could be practised. In Lincoln recently there had been 700 cases of typhoid fever brought about by an inefficient water supply, and the cost of that outbreak would have twice over supplied Lincoln with a supply of pure water. Expenditure on drainage, sewage disposal, or water supply ought to be encouraged by the Local Government Board, and allowed the most liberal terms they could command. The authorities at the Local Government Board knew how difficult it was to get local authorities to incur large expenditure for public health purposes. The bigger authorities would undertake it because they were always allowed the longest terms for repayment, but the smaller authorities were usually unable to get the same length of term, and therefore were more frightened at the expenditure. For these reasons he should support the Amendment of his hon. friend.

The SECRETARY to the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Grant Lawson, Yorkshire, N.R. Thirsk) said he did not know where the hon. Member opposite learnt his financial policy; it was certainly not at the Local Government Board. Hon. Members were altogether mistaken in supposing that the Board had adopted a dictatorial or overbearing attitude to the Committee. The Committee had the whole of the facts before them, and on the evidence submitted to them, which, of course, was the evidence of the present ratepayers, they came to their decision. The House was now asked to overrule the decision of the Committee, and without any evidence as to the special circumstances of the case to fix one of the most difficult things possible, viz., the proper period of a loan for waterworks under certain conditions. If there were special features in the case they were considered by the Committee. He might point out that for works and land orginally estimated to cost £270,000 no less than £691,000 had been required, a fact which showed very curious finance and somewhat doubtful engineering skill. The House ought to be very careful in this matter of the period of loans. The enormous increase in the amount of local debt was a very serious matter and the only way in which it could be checked was by placing at any rate a considerable proportion of the burden upon those who by their votes decided upon making the expenditure. No doubt there would be relief to the present ratepayers if the period of repayment were extended to sixty years, but what would happen in the future? According to the Report of a Committee over which he himself presided, the result of extending the period of repayment for a loan of £250,000 from thirty to sixty years would mean a saving of over £3,000 a year to the present ratepayers, but the amount of interest alone would be £291,994 as against £132,600 for the shorter period, so that from the point of view of the Swansea ratepayers it would really be penny wise and pound foolish to extend the period of repayment. He hoped the House would reject the Amendment.

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 153; Noes, 111. (Division List No. 142.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allen, Charles P.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hon. Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bingham, Lord
Bond, Edward
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hn. St. John
Bull, William James
Caldwell, James
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Chamberlain, Rt Hn J. A. (Worc.)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley-
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Rt. Hn. Ailwyn Edw.
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r)
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Grant, Corrie
Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury)
Greene, Henry D (Shrewsbury
Gretton, John
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside)
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, Jn. (Kent, Faversham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Joicey, Sir James
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Kenyon, Hn. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lamont, Norman
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson, J. Grant (Yorks. N.R.
Lee, Arthur H (Hants., Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W.)
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants.)
Morgan David J. (Walthamstow)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Nicholson, William Graham
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Earnest George
Purvis, Robert
Rankin, Sir James
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stevenson, Francis S.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Turnour, Viscount
Ure, Alexander
Valentia, Viscount
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton)
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H (Yorks.)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Rose and Mr. Allhusen.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Atherley-Jones, L.
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Barlow, John Emmott
Beaumont, Wentworth C.B.
Bell, Richard
Benn, John Williams
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Blake, Edward
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Broadhurst, Henry
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Butcher, John George
Campbell, John (Armagh, S)
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cremer William Randal
Crooks, William
Dalziel, James Henry
Dewar, Sir T. R. (Tower Hamlets)
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Duke, Henry Edward
Duncan, J. Hastings
Ellice, Capt. EC (S. Andrw's Bghs)

Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Harcourt, Lewis
Harwood, George
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Heath, Sir James (Staffords NW.)
Higham, John Sharp
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Jones, Lief (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Kitson, Sir James
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monm'th
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
Lough, Thomas
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Macdona, John Cumming
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen
Morpeth, Viscount
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
Perks, Robert William
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Priestley, Arthur
Pym, C. Guy
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Rea, Russell
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Samuel, Sir Harry S. (Limehouse)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Soares, Ernest J.
Spear, John Ward
Spencer Rt Hn C. R. (Northhants
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthy
Thomas J. A. (Glamorgan, Gower
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hudders'fd
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir George Newnes and Mr. Brynmor Jones.

Bill to be read the third time.

AGRICULTURAL RATES ACT, 1896, ETC., CONTINUANCE BILL.

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment to Question [17th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'no Bill dealing with the severe burden of the local rates on the agricultural industry will be satisfactory or afford permanent relief which does not provide for a contribution payable by the owners of land based on its selling value, and utilise the fund so provided to relieve the ratepayers of a substantial portion of the burdens which result from the local payment of national services, and from the incidence of existing rates on buildings and improvements, instead of adopting the crude and unfair method of paying half the rates on agricultural land out of the Imperial Exchequer.'"—(*Mr. Whitley*) instead thereof.

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. SOARES (continuing) said that when interrupted by the adjournment he was congratulating hon. Members opposite on their touching and childlike faith in the beneficence of landlords and the good intentions of the present Government. And yet the hon. Member for Tavistock had said that during the last twenty years farmers had not made any interest on their capital and had had only bread and cheese for their dinner. He presumed, however, that during that twenty years the landlords had been receiving their rents, and certainly the Party opposite had been in office throughout the whole period with a very short break. It, therefore, seemed that the tenant farmer, at any rate, had very little reason to hold any strong faith in the present Administration. Instead of benefiting the agricultural industry the present Government had more or less injured it. For instance, they had passed the Motor Car Act. The cost of repairing the damage done to the high roads by motor-cars fell upon the agricultural community. The Government had passed the Education Act, the rates for which were not only high, but were destined to increase steadily from year to year. Proper provision had not been made for the cost of education, and the burden of the education rate was falling heavily upon the agricultural community. In spite of all these additional heavy burdens, the Agricultural Rates Act was at the same figure as in 1896. But, nevertheless, he was going to vote for the Second Reading of this Bill because he believed that the benefit, although it went to the landlord in the majority of cases, also went to the small freeholder and to those in possession of long leases. It would be unfair to repeal this Act now, because many farmers had taken their farms relying upon this Act being continued. What was required was that the whole rating law should be thoroughly overhauled. At the present time personalty did not pay its fair share towards local burdens, but he did not think any good suggestions had been made as to the way personalty could be rated. He thought the only way to accomplish this was to graduate the income-tax and make grants-in-aid towards local burdens. He did not think that the grants now made under this Act should be abolished unless accompanied by a scientific readjustment of the local burdens of taxation. Inasmuch as they did not want this Act discontinued, he hoped the Second Reading would be passed without a division. When the whole question of rating came to be considered, he hoped it would be dealt with not by the present Administration, but by a Liberal Government which would not have regard so much to the interests of the landlords, but would pay some regard to the interests of the tenant farmer and see that he got his fair share of relief from the burdens of taxation.

*MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland) said there seemed to be a delightful unanimity of opinion that the Government had seriously neglected their duty upon this question during the last nine years by not bringing in a comprehensive measure. This was one of the most important questions that could come before the country and the House. It raised the question of the position of the agriculturist in this country and the point as to how farming could be best carried on. The hon. and gallant Member for Essex had told them that if they did not want to deteriorate into a miserable class of humanity, unable to serve their country either in the Army or in the field, there were only two alternatives—they must either relieve the country districts of rates and taxes, or else go back to a system of bounties upon corn. He would venture to suggest a third alternative, namely, the establishment of a peasant proprietary upon the land. He thought that was the only true solution. The position of affairs in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland in regard to this Bill was entirely different to what had been described by other hon. Members as to the manner in which it affected their constituencies, because in Scotland this form of relief to the crofters would not affect the position of the landlords. The rent was fixed, and if they took away this measure of relief it would be a serious matter for the crofting community. He knew that the whole question was surrounded with difficulties, but were they to part with this small measure of relief because it had been alluded to in a doctrinaire fashion without regard to the manner in which the people lived? He knew of poor country districts where the rates were up to 12s. and 14s. in the £. He did not think the hon. Member for the Elland Division had treated the matter from the practical point of view. As far back as 1878 the New Zealand Government had legislated according to the ideas of the hon. Member. The Act was a dead failure, brought nothing to the Exchequer and did nothing for either town or country. In more recent times similar provisions had again been enacted and they were a dead letter. Land was valued by a Government officer whose instructions were as far as possible to ensure fair valuation all over the country. Coming to farms of the same selling value nothing would be allowed by way of deduction from taxation for improvements, and although the wording of the Act was plain, no lawyer would advise an action against the Government. The plain fact was that there was no such thing as a taxable asset as the unimproved and prime value of land. He would remind his hon. friend that directly they began to tax the unimproved value of land they would find themselves involved in a sea of difficulty out of which there was no means of escape. It should not be overlooked that land without population was absolutely valueless. Again, to reduce the relief given to those living on and about the land was not the way to get at the unimproved value. The only effective way to deal with the matter was by a system of compulsory purchase.

He could corroborate what had been said by the hon. Member for Tavistock as to the condition of the farming industry, for he knew farmer after farmer in his own county who was barely making a living, and who did not earn equivalent to the ordinary man who was getting £1 a week in wages. These men remained on the land because they felt that they were doing a good service to the State as well as to themselves and their families. The disadvantages of farmers as compared with tradesmen was that farmers had to labour under a great land monopoly system. If farmers had not been handicapped at every turn by the position in which landlords had been placed they would now have been in a far more prosperous state, and the state of the agricultural industry to-day would have been much different. At the present moment the position of the agricultural labourer was the worst possible. He did not approve of the attempt which had been made to set country against town, because a town could not succeed if the country was being beggared. They had to largely depend upon the country, because it was from the land that everything came, and if they handicapped the land and prevented free access to it, it was impossible for the agricultural industry to be carried on in a satisfactory way. The hon. Member for West Birmingham, in a recent speech, had said at Limehouse that this was not an agricultural country. He wished to point out that with the exception of Belgium this country produced more corn per acre than any other country in the world. He was aware that it was not of the same excellent quality as in some places where the yield was smaller, but nevertheless English farming was excellent, and it was an undoubted fact that this country was capable of growing corn successfully. Scotch farmers were proverbial for their farming abilities, and those who had visited Ireland must have come to the conclusion that as an agricultural or a grazing country Ireland did not lag behind either England or Scotland. There were large quantities of grazing land in Ireland superior to any of the land in England and Scotland, and it was worth two or three times as much. Therefore, he should support the Government in this small measure of relief which was given under this Bill.

They had been told by the hon. and gallant Member for Essex that there were thousands of acres of derelict land in Essex. If the hon. and gallant Member would take them round that land and inform them what the amount of tithe rent-charge and other disadvantages were they would readily understand why it was that agriculture was so much handicapped in every direction. The land wanted freedom, and if they could have it cultivated by a peasant proprietary there would then be absolutely no necessity to come to the Government for bribes and doles. The necessity for revaluation had been alluded to. He did not think they wanted anything of the sort, for what they required was that some of the services thrown upon the land should be nationalised, in order to give some relief to the rates of the poor. Under all the circumstances he felt that this House would only be doing its duty if it supported the Government in endeavouring to pass this Bill.

Sir MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbrightshire) said he was quite satisfied that the relief which had been given to the agricultural industry under this Act in the past had been the means of keeping many farmers upon their farms who would otherwise have ceased to be tenants. By passing this Act, in the first instance, in spite of the great opposition of the other side of the House, the Government had shown that they were desirous of doing something for the tenant farmer. The hon. Member who spoke last said that rents were being paid and that the landlords were flourishing, but was that statement true? Were the tenants getting anything at all out of the land? He was sure that they were not getting sufficient to keep themselves and their families. And yet hon. Members came down to the House of Commons and said that the farmers were well off, and that the landlords were better off still. It was a well-known fact that the rental of an estate was not always a true indication of its prosperity or value, because a great many deductions had to be made. He contended that the condition of agriculture was at a low ebb just now, and tenant farmers, as a rule, were making only a bare living. In his opinion the relief given under this Bill was neither a dole nor a bribe, but it was only what was due to the landed interest. Why should not a tenant on his farm be allowed to have the land just as a tradesman had his capital to work with. The land was the farmer's capital, and if he did not work it to its full extent he incurred losses, and when he was rated and taxed as at present he was practically called upon to pay twice over. The Government had been twitted with having been in office for nine years without bringing in a comprehensive Bill dealing with this question, but he would like to ask why previous Governments had not dealt with it? He hoped that the House would agree to pass the Second Reading of this Bill.

SIR BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.) said that to him the proposals in this Bill seemed to run on parallel lines with the sugar bounties. He thought they were wrong and should never have been put on, but he felt that if they were done away with by a stroke of the pen a great deal of misery and hardship would occur. He felt the same with regard to the proposals in this Bill, because it had now been in operation for nine years and they could not do away with it without doing a considerable amount of injustice. He thought he should only be acting consistently if he took the same view as he did in regard to the sugar bounties. Four years ago when the Bill was renewed they were in the middle of a very extensive war, and he thought it was the duty of those men of mature age like himself to make some sacrifice, and to make some contribution towards the expenses of the war. Circumstances were different now, because there was no war going on, and there was no necessity to make the same sacrifices. The First Lord of the Treasury had said that before this great question could be dealt with properly it would be necessary to pass a Valuation Bill. They had such a Bill brought forward last year which in his opinion formed a good basis for a settlement. He did not deny that there were difficulties in regard to any scheme dealing with the incidence of local taxation. He wished to point out, however, that right hon. Gentlemen opposite were the e to deal with difficult questions, and they had no more right to shirk them than a soldier had to shirk a difficult situation in warfare. His hon. friend had suggested that the Scotch method was a very good plan. He did not think that it signified much who paid the rates in the first instance, because he thought that they would ultimately fall upon the landlord.

He was a small landowner and tenant farmer himself, and he viewed the subject from both sides. He felt quite sure that the rates did fall upon the landlord and he had never entertained any view to the contrary. Long before this Act was in force he made a speech in the country in which he spoke of the incidence of the rates falling upon the landlords, and a letter was written by a prominent Conservative pointing out that the incidence of the rates was upon the landlord. What would happen if this Bill were not renewed? On Michaelmas Day next every tenant would appear before his landlord and demand a reduction in rent, and if he did not get it he would give a year's notice. He quite agreed with his hon. friend the Member for Somersetshire that it was impossible to adopt the remedy suggested of assessing land at its unimproved value, because there was no such thing as the unimproved value of land. People got into a loose way of talking about the buying, selling, and hiring of land. What was bought, sold, or hired was the improvement of the land, the process of improvement having gone on from generation to generation. Sometimes it was a little more or a little less, but for the moment the improvement of the land had disappeared entirely, and the buildings were all that remained. There was no estate in his part of the world that could not be bought for a smaller sum than that for which the buildings were insured. Even the improved value had disappeared. Four years ago, as he had said, he was prepared to make a sacrifice of this subvention for the good of the country. He was very glad indeed that the sacrifice was not accepted, and he did not think he was required to make the sacrifice again. He did not think that any landowner should vote for the Bill because it would put money in his own pocket, but landowners were certainly not called upon to oppose it. He thought the hon. Member for Halifax would be wisely advised if he would ask leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Mr. A. K. LOYD (Berkshire, Abingdon) said there was a great deal of misunderstanding and misrepresentation in regard to this legislation which would be removed if it were borne in mind that the term "relief" as applied to this Bill was very ambiguous. Relief might be either a compassionate allowance or the removal of a grievance. He repudiated absolutely the idea that there was anything in the nature of charitable relief in this legislation. It effected only the removal of a long-standing and grevious injustice—an injustice not as between realty and personalty, but as between two sorts of rateable property—as between the occupier of agricultural land and the owner of clerical tithe rent-charge, and other owners and occupiers of rateable property. The farmer was rated not only on his dwelling-house and other buildings, but on the land which corresponded to the stock-in-trade of his fellow ratepayers. The parson was still made rateable in respect of his salary, though all other forms of personalty were released from liability as long ago as 1840. That was recognised by Sir Robert Peel, Mr. Gladstone, and Sir G. Cornwall Lewis, and that was why the Act of 1840 was made an annual Act. Each of these so-called favoured classes had still just the same grievance as the urban ratepayer in respect to his house and buildings, and had the same right to complain that the whole question of rating as between realty and personalty had not been dealt with. There was no injustice of the kind pointed out by the hon. Member for West Ham. The urban ratepayer had no grievance whatever that was not still resting heavily upon the agricultural ratepayer and the tithe-owner, and this Bill was directed to meet the extra injustice existing as between the latter and the general class of ratepayers. There had been no reversal of the order of the Royal Commission's Report. Hon. Gentlemen opposite came down to the House and imputed all the basest motives to hon. Gentlemen on his side for supporting that legislation, then said they were going to do the same thing, and afterwards asked the country to believe they were actuated by the highest motives and hon. Members on his side by the worst, because the latter had never wavered in their opinion on that question.

Mr. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton) said that the President of the Local Government Board had told them that the first essential towards the solution of this matter was to have uniformity in valuation for rating. It seemed to him that the Government had been rather playing with the subject. They only introduced a Valuation Bill for the first time last year, and they made no attempt to push it forward. This year the right hon. Gentleman said that the Bill was in an advanced stage of preparation. The Royal Commission on Local Taxation had reported, and the Agricultural Rates Act had been in operation for nine years. Surely the Government had had time to make up their mind, and yet the right hon. Gentleman was not prepared to produce the Bill. One would have expected that by this time the Government would have been able to lay upon the Table their detailed proposals for the reorganisation of local rating. To his mind that was degrading the House o, Commons, and absolutely playing with the country. He did not know any Bill which had been disparaged more by its movers than this Bill had been disparagd by the right hon. Gentleman himself. The right hon. Gentleman stated that it was neither a complete nor permanent scheme, it was admittedly incomplete and provisional. He was sure that the right hon. Gentleman, although he had not been long President of the Local Government Board, would admit that the present measure was crude and clumsy, giving most relief to the land which least needed it. The hon. Member for Essex stated that in his constituency there were thousands of acres of derelict land. How much relief had these acres got from this Bill? That derelict land ought to be benefited by this Act if any land was to receive benefit.

This Bill would perpetuate the inelasticity of the Act of 1896. The subvention amounted to £1,330,000, and they had been told that this had been the salvation of the agricultural interest. He had always contended that this Bill did not proceed on the right lines. It did not take into account the fact that rates were rising, and that while the rates rose the Treasury subvention was stereotyped, and that, therefore, the farmer was hit if the rates increased during his tenancy. Unfortunately the grievance in connection with rural rating had been largely accentuated during the past nine years. Nobody could deny that rural rates had increased to an enormous extent. Local bodies had been created, and when a local body desired to show that it wanted to do good to its neighbours it could only do good by spending money, and the more it spent the more it had to take out of the ratepayers' pockets. His hon. friend the Member for the Tavistock Division had said that there had been a natural increase of rates.

Mr. SPEAR: I said that a natural increase of rates had arisen very largely from the increased cost of main roads.

Mr. LAMBERT said there was no doubt that the cost of main roads had contributed in some degree to the increase, but he apprehended that the Education Act had contributed in a far greater degree in Devonshire. He was afraid that the education rate there would be something like 1s. in the £. In Surrey the education rate would be the same amount. Here was an admitted grievance, and the Agricultural Rates Act did not touch it at all. The benefits of the Act had been largely neutralised because of the enormous burdens put on the ratepayers by local bodies. If a farm was valued at, say, £100, and the rates rose 1s. in the £, the farmer would have to pay £5 a year more, but he could not go to the landlord and ask a reduction in his rent of £5. It cost a tenant farmer a considerable amount to move from one farm to another, and, therefore, rather than change he paid the increased rate, while getting no reduction of rent. If the Government had been in earnest in this matter they would have introduced a measure giving effect to the principle advocated years ago of a division of rates between landlord and tenant. If the rates increased the landlord should pay his share as well as the tenant.

There was one principle in this Act that had been valuable to the agricultural interest and that was the rating of land at half its annual value. With the rising rates, if land had been rated at its full value there would have been a great deal more derelict land than there was at present. It was the splendid surplus which Sir William Harcourt left them that enabled the Government to pass this Act. If hon. Members opposite distrusted the future action of the Liberal Party in regard to this measure, why did they not make it permanent?

Mr. A. K. LOYD said it was originally intended that it should be permanent. It was only made temporary in deference to the pressure of the Liberal Party.

Mr. LAMBERT said he was in the House of Commons in 1896 and he knew that the Government had a majority of 160. It was ridiculous, therefore, to talk of the pressure of the Liberal Party. There was an essential difference between urban and rural rating in this matter. Urban land derived its value from the labour of the community and, therefore, he said to his friends in the town, "By all means tax this land so as to relieve the rates that fall upon those who live in large centres of population." The hon. Member for West Ham denounced this Bill, but why did he and his colleagues who represented those highly-burdened communities not devote some of their energies to the taxing of ground which was of enormous value in the city of London? Many landowners derived princely revenues from the city of London, while they paid very little in rates. There was a difference between urban land and rural land. Rural land had no value except that which was created by the skill of the farmer and the capital of the landlord. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the Elland Division said they must base taxation on the unimproved value of agricultural land. He could tell his hon. friend that value would be very small indeed. He looked over an estate the other day for the purpose of valuing the buildings for insurance. He was amazed to find that the buildings amounted to £4,800, though the whole value of the estate, if put into the market, would not be more than £8,000. He agreed with the hon. Member for Halifax that the present system did check enterprise, but in this matter they had not a "clean slate." If they had a clean slate he would have no hesitation in voting for the Amendment. He was glad to hear his hon. friend say that he wished to relieve agriculture of national services such as the maintenance of main roads. Whatever might be the defects of the Bill he thought it was impossible at the present moment to withdraw it. The Leader of the Opposition had taken the right course in the matter. Land had now been bought and sold subject to half the rate being paid, and, unless they were prepared to introduce drastic legislation to enable every tenant farmer to claim the amount which he now received in subvention from his landlord, it would be impossible to withdraw the Bill. But the time would come when the problem of rural rating would be put on a sound basis, on the principle that those who had the most should pay the most in rates.

*MR. PEEL (Manchester, S.) said hon. Members opposite had been escaping down the back stairs on this question. He thought it was almost time for the hon. Member who crossed the floor of the House on this very question to return to this side of the House, since his present associates had now been converted to views to which he so strongly objected. Hon. Members opposite seemed to have got fonder and fonder of this Bill, for which the hon. Member who spoke last had actually taken credit. He agreed with a great many of the observations made in the remarkable speech by the hon. Member for North Norfolk. A great deal had been said about the rates on land being an hereditary burden as the land had been bought and sold subject to them. He did not see how that argument vanished away after an interval of five or nine years. How could they then be transformed into non-hereditary burdens? That was a very remarkable way of evading the question. There was the speech of the Leader of the Opposition, who said, "My views are exactly the same as they were four or five years ago, and yet my policy has changed." The policy was not founded on his own views, but on the views of other people. On the other hand, the hon. Member for Oldham said he was going to support the Bill although he disagreed with the principle of it. That was very remarkable; the course was generally the other way, for some people agreed to support a Bill in principle but not in its details. He sympathised with the hon. Members for Oldham and Elland, because he always sympathised with good men struggling with adversity. Then, the hon. Member for Barnstaple began by making a speech on the Bill four years ago, and then he suddenly changed his mind.

MR. SOARES said he did not speak four years ago.

*MR. PEEL said he sympathised with the hon. Gentleman that he did not get rid of his speech on that occasion. The hon. Member now said that a number of long leaseholders and small leaseholders would get considerable advantage from the Bill.

MR. SOARES said he had voted for the Bill four years ago.

*MR. PEEL said he was very glad to hear it, but he certainly thought from the remarks which the hon. Member had made about landlords, that he could not, consistently with his principles, have voted for the Bill. The fact really was, as stated very frankly by the hon. Member opposite, that the rent did not represent the value of the land. It represented a very small percentage on the capital cost and the improvements made on the land. A land agent told him the other day that all over Bedfordshire the rent did not represent more than, if so much as, one per cent. of the value of the land and the money spent in improvements and buildings. He was glad to see that the curious prejudice against landlords, which was due to causes which had long ceased to exist, was really dying out amongst hon. Members opposite.

Hon. Members had spoken about the grievances of urban ratepayers. He did not desire to minimise these grievances, but he thought the means for stemming the tide of municipal expenditure lay in the hands of urban ratepayers themselves, if they would only use them. It was a curious fact that in the election for the London County Council not 40 per cent. of the ratepayers on each side could be induced to come and vote at the polls. That being so, it did not lie with the urban ratepayers to say to Parliament, "Do not give this relief to the agricultural ratepayers, but come to our assistance."

Mr. GEORGE WHITELEY (Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey) said that, seeing the hon. Member represented a Manchester constituency, did he think it fair that the ratepayers of Manchester should pay 7s. 8½d. a year in rates and be made to contribute also to the rural rates?

*Mr. PEEL said he had not been much challenged on the question in Manchester. He maintained that if there was a definite unfairness on the agricultural interest of the burden of the rates that grievance ought to be removed, and if it was to be removed the money must come from somewhere.

Mr. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) said he did not quite understand where they stood in this matter. At the time of the general election, when he was returned to the House, he received a large amount of printed matter from the Liberal Federation in London, and pamphlets were largely circulated among his constituents, showing the doles given to the parsons and squires. He believed that the statements set out in those pamphlets were absolutely true, and he still believed it. But, unhappily, there were divisions among hon. Members on his side of the House on this question, for reasons best known to themselves. Speaking for himself, he had only to say that he had been severed from his Party on one question only, the question of Chinese Labour; but he did not say one thing to his constituents for the purpose of catching votes, and on the eve of a general election say another. He approached this question, not from the standpoint of the landowner, but of the man connected with industrial enterprises; and he could not see why a burden should be taken off the landowners and placed on the shoulders of the ratepayers in the manufacturing and industrial districts. When a farmer took a farm he was bound to take into consideration the amount of rates he would be called upon to pay in addition to his rent, and if the burden of the rates was taken off the land the landlord would get the benefit. They had been told from the other side that the farmers had been living on the verge of starvation, only able to earn bread and cheese. He knew it was said that a landlord was entitled to get the best rent he could from his tenant; but why should he come to the House of Commons and say that the farmers were living on the verge of starvation? If that were the case, why did he not reduce the rent to his tenants so as to enable the farmers to get a good living? Why should landlords ask the House of Commons to grant relief on rates to one section of the community, and place the burden on other industries who were not better able to bear it than the landlords. He, for one, should divide the House on this question.

Colonel KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport) said that the hon. Member for the Mansfield Division had told the House, with great truth, that at the last general election Liberals obtained their seats by denouncing what they were going to vote for that night.

Mr. MARKHAM said he entirely repudiated that. He stood by his condemnation of the Bill, and would vote against it.

Colonel KENYON-SLANEY said that at any rate those Liberal pamphlets argued exactly contrary to the way the Liberal leader was going to vote that night. His hon. friend said that the landlords should reduce their rents, but in exact proportion as the landlords reduced rents they reduced the employment of the people and so drove the rural population into the towns. He agreed with the hon. Member on his side of the House that had it not been for this Act there would have been far more derelict land in the country than there was to-day. The hon. Gentleman who represented the Barnstaple Division said that the landlords had taken a very unfair advantage of the Act to raise rents. That was one of the chief weapons used against landlords in the country. He challenged the hon. Member to give one single instance, naming the man, the parish, and the farm, of a rise of rent which had resulted from the passage of this measure. Until that was done he was justified in saying that this manner of abusing the landlords was unfair.

Mr. **SOARES** said he could give the hon. Gentleman an instance.

Colonel **KENYON-SLANEY** said he wanted the name, the place, and the date on which rent had been raised on account of the passage of this Act. Then, and not till then, would he believe in the value of these charges which, he repeated, were unfair and unmanly. The hon. Member for Oldham had said, fairly enough, that the agricultural Members did not always recollect that the urban ratepayers had a grievance. He insisted that they did acknowledge that freely, and hoped, when the proper time came, that that grievance would be remedied, and that the whole matter of local taxation would be put on an equitable basis. It had been very interesting to him to see the unanimity of the condemnation of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Halifax; and he hoped the result would be that the principle of the Bill would be acknowledged by the House as fair and equitable; and that its passage would lead to a still wider and broader treatment of local taxation which would remove every grievance. He could not forget, however, the strenuous opposition offered to the Act four years ago by the Party opposite, and if they had found out that the opposition was foolish, they could not do better than follow the Unionist Party in future.

*Sir **WALTER FOSTER** (Derbyshire, Ilkeston) said that the hon. and gallant Gentleman who had just sat down had described the Amendment as one which had met with universal condemnation. He could not assent to that. It was a very useful Amendment, and had given a very much wider and more interesting character to the debate than they could have had without it. Therefore, he thought the House was indebted to his hon. friend for putting his Amendment on the Paper. At any rate, it had suggested an alternative to the scheme of the Bill. However, the Amendment had served his purpose, and he thought in the circumstances his hon. friend would be wise to withdraw it. If the Amendment were got out of the way they would have a straight issue on the Bill itself.

Mr. **WHITLEY** said he had put before the House what he regarded as a constructive policy rather than the confused makeshift put forward by the Government for the third time. He should not, however, trouble the House to take a division on his Amendment; but be content to take the division on the Main Question.

Question put, and agreed.

Main Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 174; Noes, 59. (Division List, No. 143.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allhusen, Augustus H. Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt.Hn.Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt.Hn. Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour,Rt.HnGeraldW.(Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bathurst, Hn. Allen Benjamin
Beach,Rt.Hn.Sir Michael Hicks
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hn. St. John
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish,V.C. W. (Derbyshire
Chamberlain,Rt.Hn.J.A (Worc.
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley-
Denny, Colonel
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Dyke, Rt.Hon.SirWilliamHart
Ellice,Capt.E.C.(SAndrw'sBghs
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes,Rt.HnAilwyn Edward
Fergusson,Rt.Hn.Sir J.(Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay,Sir R.B.(Inv'rn'ssB'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William

Fuller, J. M. F.
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn.J.E.(Elgin & Nairn
Gordon,Maj.Evans(T'r H'mlets
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Greene, W. Raymond-(Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton,Marq.of(L'nd'nderry
Hardy, Laurence(Kent,Ashford
Heath, SirJames(Staffords.NW
Henderson, SirA.(Stafford, W.)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hope, J. F.(Sheffield,Brightside
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard,John(Kent,Faversh'm
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Kenyon, Hon.Geo.T.(Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt.Hn.Col.W.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Kimber, Sir Henry
Lambert, George
Lambton, Hon.Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson, JohnGrant(YorksN.R
Lee, Arthur H.(Hants,Fareham
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, FrederickN.S.
Long, Col. Charles W.(Evesham
Long, Rt.Hn.Walter(Bristol,S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Reginald J.(Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, SirLewis(EdinburghW
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Marks, Harry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants.
Morgan, DavidJ(Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Nicholson, William Graham
Peel, Hn.Wm.RobertWellesley
Percy, Earl
Perks, Robert William
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederick Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rose, Charles Day
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford,East)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Rt.Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Turnour, Viscount
Wason, John Cathcart(Orkney
Welby, Sir Charles G.E.(Notts.)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, SirW.H.(Yorks.)
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.
Bell, Richard
Benn, John Williams
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Burke, E. Haviland-
Caldwell, James
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cremer, William Randal
Dalziel, James Henry
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Fenwick, Charles
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Harwood, George
Higham, John Sharp
Holland, Sir William Henry
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, William(Carnarvonshire
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kitson, Sir James
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F.(Accrington
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
Mooney, John J.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, David Alfred(Merthyr
Thomas,J.A(Glamorgan,Gower
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Whiteley, George (York, W. R.
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.
Woodhouse,SirJ.T.(Huddersf'd

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Markham and Mr. Yoxall.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Wednesday, 3rd May.

PUBLIC ROAD (IRELAND) BILL.

Read a second time, and committed for this day.

Adjourned at twelve minutes after Twelve o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 18th April, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. SPEAKER, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—East Cowes Gas Bill [Lords]; Leeds and Liverpool Canal Bill [Lords]; Orphan Working School and Alexandra Orphanage Bill [Lords]; Southend and Colchester Light Railways Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time upon Tuesday, May 2nd.

Great Western Railway (New Railways) Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Aberdare Urban District Council Bill (changed from "Aberdare Tramways Bill"). As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Aylesbury Gas Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Colne Corporation Bill. As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

Ealing Corporation Bill; South Oxfordshire Water and Gas Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Nine Mile Point Railway Bill [Lords]; Worcestershire County Council (Bridges) Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Mexborough and Swinton Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords] (by Order). Read a second time, and committed.

Great Northern (Ireland) and Midland Railways Bill (by Order). Adjourned Debate on Question [April 12th] further adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

Municipal Corporations (Merthyr Tydvil Scheme Confirmation) Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill. "To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade, under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Barnet, Brockenhurst, Farnham, Gosport and Alverstoke, Houghton-le-Spring and District (Amendment), Lichfield, Ludlow, Lytham, St. Albans (Rural), and Ware," presented by Mr. Bonar Law; supported by Mr. Victor Cavendish; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 181.]

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill. "To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade, under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Bishop's

Stortford, Dover (Extension), Hemsworth and District, Marlborough, Tottington, and Woking (Chertsey Extension)," presented by Mr. Bonar Law; supported by Mr. Victor Cavendish; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 182.]

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill. "To confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board for Ireland, under The Local Government (Ireland) (No. 2) Act, 1900," presented by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland; supported by Mr. Walter Long; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 183.]

DIVORCE BILLS.

Mr. Attorney-General, Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland, Mr. Serjeant Hemphill, Sir John Kennaway, Sir Joseph Leese, The Lord Advocate, Sir Robert Reid, Mr. Solicitor-General, and Mr. Thomas Shaw, were nominated members of the Select Committee on Divorce Bills.

Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords to request that their Lordships will be pleased to communicate to the House copies of the Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings, together with documents deposited in the case of McConnell's Divorce Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Select Committee on Divorce Bills that they do hear Counsel and examine Witnesses for McConnell's Divorce Bill [Lords], and also that they do hear Counsel and examine Witnesses against the Bill, if the parties concerned think fit to be heard by Counsel and produce Witnesses.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

PETITIONS.

CANADIAN AND FOREIGN STORE CATTLE (IMPORTATION INTO GREAT BRITAIN).

Against alteration of existing regulations; and Motor-Cars, for alteration of regulations, Petition from Appin; to lie upon the Table.

DOGS (PROTECTION) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Lancashire and Cheshire; and the Southern Counties; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Burghead; Carnoustie; Glasgow (five); Larkhall; Leith; Montrose; Perth; Rothesay; and Sanquhar; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petitions against; from Heybridge; and Kew and other places; to lie upon the Table.

MERCHANDISE MARKS BILL.

Petition from Huddersfield, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE (COMPANIES) BILL.

Petition from Huddersfield, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Petition from Huddersfield, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS (SUNDAY) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Lincoln; and Market Drayton; to lie upon the Table.

SECONDARY EDUCATION.

Petition of Thomas Allen, for alteration of the Order in Council of the 6th March, 1902; to lie upon the Table.

SUMMARY JURISDICTION (CHILDREN) BILL.

Petition from Bristol, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petition from Bristol, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Drawback on Tobacco Stalks.

Mr. DUNCAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Otley): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will grant tobacco manufacturers the power to claim the drawback on tobacco stalks when delivered to the bonded warehouse nearest their manufactories.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) Tobacco manufacturers may claim drawback on tobacco stalks—(a) When delivered to a Customs bonded warehouse for the purpose of being converted into sheepwash or of being denatured; (b) when delivered to a King's warehouse and abandoned to the Crown; (c) when shipped for exportation. I am considering how far it may be possible to provide by law for the deposit in bonded warehouses of tobacco stalks intended for exportation, and for payment of the drawback at the time of warehousing instead of after shipment as provided by The Manufactured Tobacco Act, 1863.

Telegraphic Withdrawals from Post Office Savings Bank.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Postmaster-General if he will state the number of withdrawals by telegraph from the Post Office Savings Bank for the year ended December 31st, 1904, and the average cost to the depositor of each such withdrawal; and will he also state the number of telegraph notices of withdrawal for payment on the following day, and the average cost to the depositor of each such telegraph notice.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The number of withdrawals by telegraph from the Post Office Savings Bank during the year ended December 31st, 1904, was 216,243, and the average cost to the depositor of each such withdrawal was about 1s. 3d. The number of telegraph notices of withdrawal for payment on the following day was 15,269, and the average cost to the depositor of each such telegraph notice was about 9d.

Temporary Hands in the Post Office Engineering Department acting as Linemen.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether a number of temporary hands of the Engineering Department, London, have been placed on the class of acting linemen for maintenance purposes, with an increase of three and a half hours work per week, without any increase of pay; and, if so, whether, seeing that these men are continuously employed, he will make the position an established one, with a reasonable increase of pay for the extra time thus imposed.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) A large number of temporary hands have been given continuous employment since 1903 as "authorised maintenance" men. With few exceptions the hours of duty of these men have not been increased; and where it has been necessary to increase the hours of duty a proportionate increase has been made to the wages. I do not propose to convert their places into established situations; but they have been given certain privileges and many of them may become established linemen as vacancies occur.

West Indian Mail Contract—Royal Mail Steam Navigation Company.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): To ask the Postmaster-General if, in deciding the new West India mail contract, due consideration will be given to the services in that regard for the past sixty-three years of the Royal Mail Steam Navigation Company, to the favourable Resolution respecting it of Colonial Legislatures, and to the fact that it was the only tenderer to the public invitation last year, and offered to carry the mails on a three per cent. return on the capital invested in the service.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The Answer to the Question is in the affirmative; but I must add that these are not by any means the only points to be considered.

Sorters in East Central Section of Sorting and Registered Letter Offices—Punishment Duty.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): To ask the Postmaster-General what is the number of sorters employed in the East Central Section, London Postal Service, Sorting Office, and the number of hours of punishment duty awarded for errors of duty, from January 1st to March 31st of the present year; also the number of sorters employed in the Registered Letter Division, East Central Section, and the number of hours punishment duty awarded for errors of duty in that division, from January 1st to March 31st of the present year.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I will obtain the information asked for and communicate it to the hon. Member.

Huddersfield Post Office Assistant Superintendentship.

Sir JAMES WOODHOUSE (Huddersfield): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will state the cause of the delay in filling the post of assistant superintendent at the Huddersfield Post Office, which has been vacant since October 31st last; and, seeing that the work is now being performed by an officer of a lower class, whether, when the appointment shall be made, the appointment and any consequent promotions will be allowed to date from the occurrence of the vacancy, in order to obviate the loss of the increased emolument payable on promotion to the officers who are not responsible for the delay.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) A revision of the higher appointments at Huddersfield is pending, and until this is settled the vacancy referred to cannot be filled. I hope, however, to come to a decision very soon, and I will then consider whether the circumstances can be regarded as so exceptional as to warrant the promotion being dated back.

Scotch Land Law—Position of Lessor under a Building Lease.

Mr. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross): To ask the Lord-Advocate whether, seeing that, under Section 200 of the Burgh Police (Scotland) Act, 1892, the right of a lessor under a building lease, however few remaining years have to run of the lease, can be confiscated under a process against the lessee, although the lessor is no party to the action or may not know of this action, so that a party purchasing holds the land in perpetuity without being liable to pay any tack duty or being subject to any building regulations of the estate on which the subjects are situate, he will be prepared to take action to have the law modified.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) My attention has been called to the decision in the Court of Session in the case of *Young* v. *Grainger*. I am not, however, at present prepared to promote legislation on the subject.

Eviction of Crofters on the Culloden Estate, Black Isle, Ross-shire.

Mr. WEIR: To ask the Lord-Advocate, in view of the fact that further eviction of crofter leaseholders on the Culloden Estate, Black Isle, Ross-shire, are contemplated, will the Government now arrange to introduce legislation for the extension of the benefits of the Crofters Act, 1886, to crofter leaseholders.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) I am unable to add anything to the Answer given on the 20th March.†

Infant Mortality.

Dr. THOMPSON (Monaghan, N.): To ask the President of the Local Government Board if he is aware of the percentage of deaths of infants; if he receives tabulated records of the deaths in different urban and rural districts; and if in future he will direct a medical inspector to visit such localities and inquire into the causes producing such results.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The Local Government Board are aware of the percentage of deaths of infants in different parts of England and Wales. Their information on this subject is derived from particulars given in the weekly and quarterly reports of the Registrar-General as to certain towns, and from the annual reports of the medical officers of health of urban and rural districts, copies of which are sent to the Board. I could not undertake to direct a medical inspector to visit every locality in which there is a high rate of infantile mortality, but where this is the case the circumstance is taken into account with other considerations in determining whether there should be a medical inspection of the district.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxliii., 460.

County of London—Rateable Value and Non-representation.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY: To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will state the total rateable value of the county of London; the proportion of the total rateable value which is represented by railways, limited companies, and other bodies not entitled to vote; and the proportion of the total rateable value which is represented by persons who compound for their rates.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The total rateable value of the administrative county of London, according to the valuation lists which came into force on the 6th April, 1905, subject to appeals, is £41,657,244. A statement published by the London County Council shows that the rateable value of railway property in the county, according to the valuation lists which came into force on the 6th April, 1901, was £2,307,864. The Board are not in a position to give the other particulars asked for.

Gambling in Futures and Options, etc.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he will consider the advisability of introducing a Bill to apply the principle of Leeman's Act respecting bank shares to all gambling in futures, options, warrants, metals, shares, commodities, and foodstuffs, to prevent fictitious dealing in property and articles which have no existence, and therefore cannot be delivered.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) The Board of Trade are not prepared to initiate legislation for the purpose desired by the hon. Member.

Position of the Buoy at the Entrance to Lough Foyle.

Mr. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the Gas and Bell Buoy, which was to be erected at the Tuns Bank entrance to Lough Foyle, has, despite the protests of the masters of the Canadian mail steamers and of the cross Channel steamers, been erected by the Commissioners of Irish Lights at the other side of the entrance to the lough, where it is not only useless for the purpose for which it was intended but when the light goes out becomes a danger to vessels making for Lough Foyle; and, if so, will he request the Commissioners to have it removed from its present position to the Tuns Bank, the place designated for it by all the master mariners frequenting the Port of Londonderry.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) The reasons which guided the Commissioners of Irish Lights in selecting the existing site for this buoy were given by my right hon. friend the President of the Local Government Board in reply to a Question by the hon. Member on March 29th, 1904.† The Commissioners now inform me that they cannot yet say whether they will be able to bring the buoy nearer to the bank or not. The Board of Trade have no power to interfere with the discretion of the general lighthouse authority in the matter.

Illegal Trawling by Foreign Boats Manned by British Crews.

Mr. HARMSWORTH (Caithness-shire): To ask Mr. Attorney-General if he is aware that, following upon the recent conviction in Wick Sheriff Court of the flag captain of the foreign trawler "Apollo" of illegal trawling, the flag captain of the trawler "Strome," a vessel registered under a foreign flag, but manned by an English crew, has since then been convicted in the same Court of a similar offence, and that the flag captain, although a foreigner, resides at Grimsby; and whether he can state if any decision has been arrived at yet to prevent a recurrence of these illegalities.

(*Answered by Sir Robert Finlay.*) I am informed that the captain of the "Strome" was fined £75, and that the fine has been paid. If there is any repetition of the offence he will be liable to fresh proceedings.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxxii., 966.

Financial Control in Macedonia.

Mr. BOND (Nottingham, E.): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any agreement has been reached as to the participation of all the great Powers in the financial control to be established in Macedonia.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) The question is still under negotiation, and we are not yet, therefore, in a position to make any statement in regard to it.

Civil Service—Salaries of Assistant Clerks.

Mr. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury why the salaries of assistant clerks serving when the amended scale of pay was introduced in 1902 were not increased to the amount of which they would have been in receipt if the new scale had been in force at the date of their appointment, in accordance with the terms of Clause XV. of the Order in Council of November 29th, 1898, and following the precedent set in the case of the junior clerks in the Office of Woods, when their increments were raised in 1897.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The question of giving retrospective effect to the concession granted to the assistant clerks in 1902 was fully considered at the time, and I am unable to depart from the decision then arrived at.

General Index to "Hansard" extending over a Long Period.

Mr. J. H. LEWIS (Flint Boroughs): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether a general index to *Hansard* extending over a long period has been projected; has any progress been made with such index; has the work been abandoned; and, if so, on what grounds.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) I understand that such an index has been contemplated by a private firm of publishers, and that considerable progress was made in the work, but that it has, however, now been abandoned, on the ground that sufficient financial support was not forthcoming.

Annual Leave in the Customs Service.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he is aware that in the Customs Department port service clerks are granted twenty-one days annual leave after five years service; messengers eighteen days after five years service; and that house porters, constables, and watchmen receive sixteen days; whereas the senior abstractors or assistant clerks, whose average length of service is over eighteen years, are granted only fourteen days; and if he can grant to the latter class such an extension of their annual leave as will bring it more into harmony with that of other ranks in the Customs Department.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The matter of leave referred to by my hon. friend will be dealt with in the reply to the memorial from the assistant clerks, which will shortly be issued.

H.M.S. "Prince George" in Collision with a German Vessel—Liability for Damage of German Government.

Mr. HARMSWORTH: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he can state whether the cost of the repairs to H.M.S. "Prince George," which collided with the "Friedrich Karl" on March 31st, have been repaid by the German Government; and, if not, whether it is the intention of His Majesty's Government to claim the cost of the repairs in question.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) This repair has already been executed. It is not intended to present any claim to the German Government in respect of it.

Obsolete Warships.

Mr. J. H. LEWIS: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can state the total amount realised by the sale of obsolete warships included in List No. 3 (except cases in which disclosure of the purchase money has been refused in the public interest); the total amount of the original cost of the warships; and the cost of repairing them during the past ten years.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The amounts realised by the sale of the obsolete vessels already disposed of have been furnished in reply to the hon. Member's Questions of April 3rd and 4th †; and the information asked for in the second and third parts of the Question will be found in the Return No. 74–1 recently issued.

Rocket Practice by Coastguards at Regattas.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that, prior to the year 1896, it was the custom of the coastguard stationed at Fowey, Cornwall, to hold their practice with the rocket life-saving apparatus at the Lerryn Regatta, on the Fowey River; and, in view of the instructive value of such exhibitions to persons residing in coast villages, can he arrange for the practice to be resumed at Lerryn Regatta; and will he consider the expediency of ordering similar practice to be held at other regattas when such a course can be adopted by the local coastguard without impeding the ordinary duties of the service.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) It is not considered that these exhibitions at regattas have any instructional value for the working of the rocket life-saving apparatus, nor are they desirable from a service point of view, and it is not proposed to resume the practice at the Lerryn or other regattas.

Coastguard Service at Poldhu.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that on the occasion of the wreck of a French vessel off the Cornish coast at Poldhu in February last, as well as at the more recent wreck of the "Khyber," the only persons saved were rescued by civilians, and that although the latter vessel was anchored close to the shore and rockets were fired throughout the night she was unable to attract the attention of the coastguard; will he state how many coastguardsmen are stationed in the vicinity, and how their absence from the scene of the respective wrecks is accounted for.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) A complaint as to the failure of the coastguard to render assistance until too late in the case of the French vessel has already been received and fully inquired into, when it was found that there was no foundation for the charge. It would be premature to make any statement at present as regards the case of the "Khyber," in view of the inquiry which is being held by the Board of Trade.

Board of Agriculture Departmental Committees.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): To ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if he will state the Departmental Committees appointed by the Board and the various subjects into which they were instructed to inquire since July, 1895.

(*Answered by Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.*) Departmental Committees have been appointed by the Board during the period named on the following subjects, viz.—

1896.	Pathology of Swine Fever.
	Sale of Ordnance Survey Maps.
1897.	Laws relating to Dogs.
	Universities and College Estates Acts.
1898.	Inland Transit of Cattle.
1899.	Glanders.
1901.	Milk and Cream Regulations.
	Agricultural Seeds.
	Scottish Agricultural Prices.
	Louping Ill and Braxy.
1902.	Butter Regulations.
	Glanders (Scientific).
1903.	Forestry.
	Dipping and Treatment of Sheep.
	Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Act.
1904.	Fruit Industry.
	Railway Rates on Agricultural Produce.
1905.	Grouse Disease.

Direct and Indirect Taxation.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will give the particulars of the calculation which have led him to the conclusion that of the estimated Tax Revenue for 1905–6 direct taxation will contribute 50·2 per cent. and indirect taxation 49·8 per cent.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxliv., 103, 304.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The calculation is based on the assumption that indirect taxes are all taxes levied in respect of consumable articles, with the exception of the export duty on coal, whether paid into the Exchequer or Local Taxation Accounts, and that direct taxes are represented by all other taxes.

Dredging of Irish Harbours.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will arrange that the Board of Works shall supply a sufficient dredging plant, and such other appliances as may be necessary, to maintain the smaller harbours around the Irish coast in an efficient condition.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The Board of Works has no such responsibility as is suggested by the hon. Member's Question. They are at present merely acting as managers of the dredger bought out of the funds of the Development Grant to reduce the cost of dredging to the authorities of harbours which cannot afford to maintain or hire dredgers.

Cork Lunatic Asylum — Overcrowding caused by Patients from other Districts.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a copy of a resolution adopted by the management committee of the Cork District Lunatic Asylum on the 21st ult., calling his attention to the fact that many insane patients of other countries and of other counties in Ireland have been committed and remain chargeable to local rates at an annual cost of about £1,240; and whether he will comply with the request of the committee and promote a Bill this session enabling it to deport such patients, with a view to reduce the present overcrowding in the asylum and to relieve the local rates of this charge.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The resolution has been received. I cannot undertake to introduce legislation of the character suggested.

The Irish Lights Board.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the want of representatives of the principal ports in Ireland on the Irish Lights Board, he will bring in a Bill to reconstitute the existing Board.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) My right hon. friend the Chief Secretary has asked me to reply to this Question. His Majesty's Government are not prepared to introduce such a Bill.

Cultivation of Beet Sugar in Ireland.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that it has been proved that the saccharine contents of sugar beets grown in the United Kingdom, but more especially in Ireland, considerably exceed the average of those grown in Germany, Austria, Russia, France, Belgium, and Holland, and that the yield of home-grown roots is higher than those grown on the Continent, and of the suitability of soil and climate, steps will be taken to establish a beet sugar factory in Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Although good yields of high quality sugar beet have been at times obtained in Ireland, the Department are satisfied that, for the reasons given in answer to the previous Questions on this subject, beet would not prove so remunerative as other root crops now grown, and they are therefore not prepared to take steps with a view to establish a beet sugar factory in Ireland.

Nurses Trained in Irish County Hospitals.

DR. THOMPSON: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that, by the arrangements enforced by the Local Government Board for Ireland in their Nursing Circulars, the Irish county hospitals are not recognised as training schools, and nurses trained in these institutions are debarred from occupying the position of charge nurses for district hospitals; and whether, in view of the experience of leading physicians and surgeons in this matter, and of the fact that nurses so trained are recognised as trained nurses in Great Britain and by the English Local Government Board, he will take steps to abrogate the rule in Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Many of the Irish county hospitals are recognised as training schools for nurses, and the Local Government Board regard as "qualified nurses" persons who have obtained certificates of proficiency from these institutions. In order to encourage the appointment of at least one qualified nurse in each Irish workhouse, it is provided by Section 58 of the Local Government Act of 1898 that one-half of the salary of such nurse shall be recouped from the local taxation account; and to insure that none but nurses of high qualifications should obtain these appointments, the Board only recognise the certificates of general clinical or other hospitals where there is a good teaching staff and a large number of beds available for instruction. The present arrangement has been found to work satisfactorily, and has received the approval of the medical profession generally.

Tyrone County Hospitals and Training of Nurses.

Dr. THOMPSON: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will lay upon the Table of the House the report of the medical inspector of the Local Government Board as to the capabilities of the Tyrone county hospitals for training nurses.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Such Reports are confidential documents, intended for the information of the Board, and it would be contrary to the invariable practice to make them public.

Schedule of Infectious Diseases in Ireland—Measles.

Dr. THOMPSON: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland why the Local Government Board for Ireland have omitted measles from the schedule of infectious diseases, in view of the character of this disease.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The infectious diseases to which the Infectious Disease (Notification) Act, 1889, applies are specified in Section 6 of the Act, and do not include measles. Power is, however, given to the sanitary authority by Section 7 to order, subject to the Board's approval, that the Act shall apply in their district, permanently or temporarily, to measles or any other infectious disease not mentioned in the Act.

Applications of Evicted Tenants on the Boxwell and Coolroe Estates.

Mr. FFRENCH (Wexford, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether applications from the evicted tenants on the Boxwell and Coolroe Estates for restoration under The Land Purchase Act, 1903, have been received by the Estates Commissioners; and if any progress has been made as regards restoring these tenants to their homes.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Applications have been received from seventeen evicted tenants from the estate of Mr. F. Boxwell, but the landlord has signified his unwillingness to sell unless all the tenants on his property should agree to purchase. The Coolroe Estate of Mr. T. D. Plaice has been placed before the Commissioners, who have directed an inspection to be made, and the case of two evicted tenants who have applied for reinstatement will at the same time be inquired into.

Evicted Tenants in County Tipperary from 1840 to 1869.

Mr. CULLINAN (Tipperary, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will grant a Return of the number, names, and residences of the tenants who were evicted in Tipperary county in the forties, fifties, and sixties, with the rent, valuation, and arrears in each case.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) No official records giving the information asked for are available.

West Indian Mail Service.

Mr. TANKERVILLE CHAMBERLAYNE (Southampton): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies what arrangements are being made for the continuation of the mail service with the West Indies, seeing that the contract with the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company expires on June 30th next, and whether the tenders lodged by that company on October 1st, 1904, were made public by a Colonial Governor, and have recently been declined; and whether fresh tenders have since been requested on exactly the same terms and conditions.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) The question of the mail service with the West Indies is still under consideration, and I am not in a position to make any announcement on the subject at present.

Irish Militia Regiments—Enlistment Bounty.

DR. THOMPSON: To ask the Secretary of State for War if his attention has been called to the effect on the numbers in the Irish Militia regiments of the non-payment of a bounty on enlistment; and if he is prepared to sanction such a division of the present annual payments that each recruit shall receive £1, or such less sum as may be determined upon, on enlistment.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The Army Council is not in possession of any information to show that the non-payment of a bounty on enlistment has any effect on recruiting for the Irish Militia, nor have any representations to this effect been made to the Council. There would not, therefore, appear to be any good reason for carrying out the alteration suggested in the last part of the Question.

Honorary Rank of Major-General for Retired Army Colonels.

SIR CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford): To ask the Secretary of State for War if his attention has been called to the system under which colonels retired for age in the Royal Marine Light Infantry are granted the honorary rank of major-general; and whether he will consider the advisability of applying this rule to substantive Army colonels retired for age as well as to officers who have lost rank and pension owing to the warrant of January 1st, 1901.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The decision to abolish the honorary rank of major-general on retirement was the result of a very careful and prolonged consideration of the various issues involved. This decision was subsequently reconsidered, and ultimately maintained by my predecessors, and I am not prepared to depart from the conclusions at which they arrived.

Payments for Stout Supplied to Army in South Africa.

MR. J. H. LEWIS: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the payment of £200 in July, 1903, for stout supplied in June, 1901, to the British Army in South Africa and the payment of £200 in January, 1904, for the same quantity of stout constitute one transaction, or are they two different transactions.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) These are two different transactions. The £200 paid in July, 1903, was for stout supplied in June, 1901. The £200 paid in January, 1904, was for stout supplied in December, 1901.

Voting Disqualification (Poor Law) Removal Bill.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will give facility for the passing of the Voting Disqualification (Poor Law) Removal Bill; and, if not, will he include it in any Bill for the betterment of the condition of the unemployed he may have in contemplation for submission to the House.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) The Government do not propose to introduce any provisions dealing with the Poor Law in the course of the present session.

Militia Bill.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can say whether he proposes to proceed with the Government Militia Bill early after Easter or later in the session.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) I fear it will hardly be possible to make progress with the Bill in the near future; but due notice will be given before the Second Reading is taken.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

His Majesty's Navy—Prize Firing Results.

Earl of DALKEITH (Roxburgh): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he can state when the results of the prize firing in His Majesty's Fleet during the last year will be published; and if he can state if the official reports show that the practice was satisfactory, and in which squadron the best results were obtained.

The CIVIL LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Arthur Lee, Hampshire, Fareham): This Return is now being printed and will be issued very shortly. It will contain the information asked for in the latter part of the hon. Member's Question.

Volunteer Brigade Majors.

*General LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): On behalf of the hon. Member for Montgomery Boroughs, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is intended to abolish Volunteer brigade majors; and, if so, what officer is to make the necessary arrangements previous to and for brigade camps, and also what financial allowance will be made to such officer.

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.): There is no present intention of abolishing Volunteer brigade majors.

*General LAURIE: What will happen when the brigade majors have retired? Will the vacancies be filled?

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I must ask for notice of that.

Promotion in the Royal Army Medical Corps.

Dr. THOMPSON (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he is aware of the discontent existing amongst the officers of the Royal Army Medical Corps at the delegation to the Advisory Board of the duty of recommending to the Secretary of State officers for promotion; and if, seeing that many of the members of the Board are civil medical practitioners, have no personal knowledge of the qualifications of many of the officers recently passed over, and are obliged to take their opinion of these officers from others junior to themselves, and that the continuation of the existing system throws the responsibility of promotions from the Secretary of State and the Director-General on the Advisory Board, he will arrange that in future officers passed over with excellent official records will be informed of the reason for their supercession.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The hon. Member raised last session the points now brought forward again, and definite replies were given to each. I have nothing to add to the Answers which I then gave him, and I am not aware of the dissatisfaction to which he alludes.

Recruiting Statistics.

*General LAURIE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state the ages of the recruits enrolled since the nine years enlistment for colour service came into operation; and whether these ages are only taken by statement of the recruit or by report of the medical officer.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The ages of the recruits mentioned were as follows for those taken up to 31st March, 1905:—

Under 18	59
18 to 19	6,185
19 to 20	2,070
20 to 21	1,044
21 to 22	636
22 to 23	430
23 to 24	345
24 to 25	296
Over 25	44.

The ages of recruits are those given by them on the attestation papers. If the medical officer thinks the age manifestly incorrect, it is for the approving officer to elicit the correct age.

*General LAURIE: Does that include the ages of recruits enlisted in the garrison battalions?

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: There have been none enlisted.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): How many recruits were under seventeen years of age?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I cannot say, but they are included with those under eighteen.

Extensions of Army Service.

*GENERAL LAURIE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state how many soldiers enlisted for three years colour service have extended their service during the past year; and whether, since the new rule of enlisting for nine years colour service has been introduced, any increase of men so enrolled as short colour-service men have extended their colour service.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The number of three years men who extended their colour service to complete eight years during the year from the 1st April, 1904, to 31st March, 1905, was 12,297, making an average of 1,025 a month. Since the introduction of enlistment for nine years with the colours the number of three years men extending has averaged 900 a month.

Young Army Recruits.

*GENERAL LAURIE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state the ages of the recruits enrolled during the time the three years colour service was in operation; and whether it has been found that in a larger percentage of cases the young soldiers under twenty years of age become more-effective in the Mediterranean and other colonial garrisons than in stations in the United Kingdom.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: With regard to the first part of the Question my hon. and gallant friend will find the statistics he requires on page 60 of the General Annual Report for 1905. With regard to the second part of the Question the variation of statistics renders comparison difficult, but there is no reason to suppose that the young soldiers become more effective in stations abroad than in the United Kingdom.

Transvaal Constitution.

MR. DAVID MORGAN (Essex, Walthamstow): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if the terms of the Transvaal Constitution will be promulgated in London and Pretoria simultaneously?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): Yes, Sir.

Railways in Northern Nigeria.

MR. SKEWES-COX (Surrey, Kingston): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if surveys for suggested railways in Northern Nigeria have been made; and from what points it is proposed to build railways.

MR. LYTTELTON: A survey for a railway from the Niger to Zaria was completed last year, but no decision to construct such a railway has yet been taken.

Administration of Indian Railways.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will lay upon the Table the correspondence between the Government of India and the Secretary of State on Mr. Robertson's Report on the Administration of the Indian Railways; and whether he will state why the Government of India in the Legislative Council refused to publish this correspondence.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): I have been in correspondence with the Government of India on the subject of the hon. Member's Question, and do not think it desirable to publish the correspondence at present. The substance of the decision arrived at as to the constitution and powers of the new Railway Board has been published in the Resolution of the Government of India included in the *Gazette of India* of 18th February last. The other questions dealt with in Mr. Robertson's Report are for the most part still under consideration.

Japanese Seizures of British Vessels.

MR. GRETTON (Derbyshire, S.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he can now state the total number of British vessels carrying alleged contraband, the seizure of which has been upheld by the Japanese Prize Courts.

The UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl PERCY, Kensington, S.): The latest information received from His Majesty's Minister at Tokio is that the appeal for the release of "M.S. Dollar" has been rejected and that the Prize Court of first instance has condemned the "Roseley," "Lettrington," and "Oakley," with their cargoes. No other judgments, we understand, have yet been rendered.

Silver Coinage in Circulation.

MR. DAVID MORGAN: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if his attention has been drawn to complaints as to the insufficient number of shillings and sixpences now in circulation as compared with the number of florins and half-crowns; and whether steps will be taken to increase the number of shillings and sixpences for circulation.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): No, Sir, I have received no complaints on this subject. There is a large supply of shillings and sixpences at the Bank of England and an ample reserve of both denominations at the Royal Mint.

Stripped Tobacco.

MR. CHARLES McARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer how many pounds of imported stripped tobacco are now, or were at the date of the last Return, in bond, subject to the duty of 3s. 3d. per lb.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The estimated weight of imported stripped tobacco subject to the duty of 3s. 3d. per lb., in Customs and Excise Bonded Warehouses on the 31st March last, was 15,860,000 lbs.

MR. CHARLES McARTHUR: I presume that does not include the stripped tobacco liable to a duty of 3s. 1d.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir, the Question contains nothing about that.

Stripped Tobacco—Memorial from Liverpool Chamber of Commerce.

MR. CHARLES McARTHUR: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has received a memorial from the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, stating that the stripped tobacco imported since the differential duty was imposed was either contracted for prior to the imposition of said duty or has been imported for manufacture in bond, and that practically no strips are now being put up in the United States for shipment to the United Kingdom; and whether he can estimate the amount of revenue which will be derived from imports of stripped tobacco during the ensuing year.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, in their memorial dated the 28th February, 1905, made the statement that 10,503 casks of strips had been imported into London, Liverpool, and Glasgow between 1st June, 1904, and 1st February, 1905, but that these casks had been either in transit or contracted for before the imposition of the extra duty—or had been imported for manufacturing in bond or for export. I take no responsibility for these statements, which I have means of checking. I have no information about what is now being done in the United States of America, but I do not suppose that any appreciable quantity of strips will be put up there for export to this country until the existing stock of strips in bond, which under the Finance Act of last year was accorded preferential treatment, has been worked off. In answer to the second part of the Question, I may say that the consumption of strips in 1904–5 was 53,810,000 lbs.—and if a similar amount were to be cleared during 1905–6 from stocks bonded before 20th April, 1904, the resulting revenue would be £336,000. If any strips imported since that date were cleared for home consumption, the revenue would be proportionately increased.

Industrial Alcohol Committee.

MR. SCOTT-MONTAGU (Hampshire, New Forest): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Minutes of the evidence taken before the Industrial Alcohol Committee will be circulated among Members in view of the early introduction of the Budget and Finance Bill.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The Minutes of Evidence were laid on the Table on Thursday last (13th instant) and I am informed that they will be circulated to-morrow morning. I do not propose to deal with this subject in the Finance Bill, but I shall make it part of a separate Bill which I shall have to introduce to deal with this and kindred subjects.

Stamped Receipt Forms for Civil Servants.

MR. GRETTON: I beg to ask the Paymaster-General if he can arrange to issue stamped receipt forms to Civil servants, instead of the unstamped forms now in use.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.): Although there may be some objections to the proposal of my hon. friend, I shall be glad to give it consideration.

Civil Service Superannuation.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he intends carrying into effect the recommendations of the Royal Commission which sat in reference to the present Civil Service Superannuation Act; and, if so, when.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: The Chancellor of the Exchequer has promised to receive after Easter a small deputation of Civil servants on the subject of the recommendations of the Royal Commission referred to, and I accordingly think it would be premature to make any statement thereon.

MR. SLOAN: Can the right hon. Gentleman say when he will receive the deputation?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir, the date has not been fixed, but it will be soon after Easter.

Telephone Agreement.

SIR WALTER THORBURN (Peebles and Selkirk): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he can state when the Motion to appoint the Select Committee on Telephone Purchase will come up for effective discussion.

THE POSTMASTER - GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): I am anxious that the Motion to appoint a Select Committee to consider the Agreement between the Postmaster-General and the National Telephone Company should be agreed to by the House as soon as possible. I had hoped that this matter would be treated as non-controversial, and I still hope that this may be the case. Certain objections as to the constitution of the Committee having been made I at once met the views of those who made the representations and they have expressed themselves as completely satisfied. While there is no necessity to have this Committee at all, still I think it would be found to be for the convenience of the House that they should have the Report of such a Committee before them before they proceed to consider the Agreement in the whole House.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): Did the noble Lord not definitely promise the House that the Agreement should be submitted to the Committee before it was sanctioned by the Government?

LORD STANLEY: No, Sir. I said I thought the best way would be for a Committee to consider it before it came up in the House. All I pledged myself to was that the House should have an opportunity of considering the Agreement before it became effective.

MR. LOUGH: Will the noble Lord bring on the discussion on the appointment of this Committee in Government time so that we may have an opportunity of discussing the constitution of the Committee?

LORD STANLEY: No, Sir. I have met hon. Members who objected to the constitution of the Committee and they have expressed themselves satisfied. If hon. Members do not like it they will not have it.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): Will the noble Lord consider the advisability of putting a Labour Member on the Committee so that the interests of the telephone operators will be properly safeguarded?

LORD STANLEY: No, Sir. I did what was wished by the oldest Labour Member of the House, with whom I conferred with regard to the constitution of the Committee. I do not think I am called upon to do anything further.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: Did the hon. Member in question come to you as a representative of the County Council or as a representative of the Labour group in the House?

LORD STANLEY: He came as a Labour Member of the House.

Committee on the Fruit Industry.

MR. ARTHUR MORTON (Deptford): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if he can name an approximate date when the Report of the Departmental Committee on the Fruit Industry will be presented.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. AILWYN FELLOWES, Huntingdonshire, Ramsey): I believe about the middle of May.

London Rates.

MR. BENN (Devonport): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can state the amount in the pound of rates levied by an equal pound rate over the whole county of London for the purposes of the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund and the Equalisation Fund, and applied to meet expenditure incurred locally by the guardians and the metropolitan borough councils.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): Taking the last year in respect of which the claims of the boards of guardians on the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund have been dealt with, the expenditure of the guardians and the Corporation of the City of London and the borough councils which, by the operation of that fund and the Equalisation Fund, was borne equally by the whole of the administrative county of London, represents the produce of a rate of 1s. 3·2d. in the £ on the assessable value of the county.

Smallpox Outbreak on the R.M.S. "Nile."

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the R.M.S. "Nile" was visited and inspected by the port sanitary authority before she entered the port of Southampton; whether any offer was made to isolate persons who had been in contact with the case of smallpox on board; what steps were taken to advise the local authorities of each place to which the passengers and crew departed of the necessity of supervision and isolation; and how many cases of smallpox have up to the present occurred in connection with the case on board the R.M.S. "Nile."

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have made inquiry on this subject and I understand that the "Nile" was visited off Netley by the medical officer of health and by a sanitary inspector of the Southampton Port Sanitary Authority, that no offer was made to isolate persons who had been in contact with the case of smallpox on board, but that the only person who was stated to have been in contact with him was disinfected, and kept under observation by the port sanitary authority. I also understand that the names and addresses of the passengers and crew were obtained, and that the local authorities of each place to which these persons stated they were proceeding were informed by post the same night. Up to the present time I have heard of nineteen cases of smallpox in England and Wales as having occurred in connection with the case on board the "Nile." Fifteen of these occurred in Southampton, eleven of which were infected on board the vessel, whilst the others occurred amongst persons who had been in contact with them.

French Sugar Duties.

MR. LOUGH: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether a reduction of the French sugar duty is allowed when beetroot sugar is carried in French ships from the northern to the southern districts of France, which is called the *detaxe de distance*; if so, will he state the amount of this reduction, and whether such allowance amounts to an indirect bounty upon sugar.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BONAR LAW, Glasgow, Blackfriars): A reduction in the sugar duty known as the *detaxe de distance* is allowed on the French sugar sent from the northern ports or Paris to French ports on the Atlantic or Mediterranean to be refined for export. The continuance of an allowance of this kind, not exceeding two francs per 100 kilogs, was expressly recognised by the Conference at which the Sugar Convention was signed. An allowance permitted by the contracting States could not be treated as a bounty for the purposes of the Convention.

Austrian Sugar Freights to India.

MR. LOUGH: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether any, and if so, what, reduction has been made by the Austrian Government in its subsidised steamship lines on the freight upon sugar carried to India to recoup the Austrian sugar producers from a part of the losses entailed on them by the abolition of the sugar bounties; and whether such reduced freight amounts to an indirect Austrian export bounty upon sugar, such as would justify us from excluding Austrian sugar from entering the United Kingdom.

MR. BONAR LAW: I understand that the Austrian Lloyd Steam Navigation Company have agreed to reduce the freight for sugar from Trieste and Fiume to Indian ports from 14s. to 10s. per ton from September 1st next, on condition that the sugar shall be carried exclusively by vessels of their line. The reduction is ascribed to the competition of Italian and other lines of steamers from Trieste and Fiume. Austria being a party to the Sugar Convention there could be no question of excluding Austrian sugar from the United Kingdom.

London Port and Docks.

MR. SKEWES-COX: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether it is the intention of His Majesty's Government to introduce any measure this session dealing with the management of the docks and port of London.

MR. BONAR LAW: The Answer is in the negative.

North Wales Quarries.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade if he can state the number of workmen dismissed during the last three months from the North Wales Quarries, Limited.

MR. BONAR LAW: The Board of Trade have not the information desired.

MR. LONSDALE: Will the hon. Gentleman inquire?

MR. BONAR LAW: We have no means of getting the information which are not open equally to the hon. Gentleman.

Education Codes.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education when the Education Code, 1905–6, for day schools will be laid; when the Evening Schools Code, 1905–6, will be laid; and whether, having regard to the findings of the Physical Deterioration Committee, the latter of these documents will make provision for a specific grant to be given on account of physical training.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University): I hope that the Day School Code will be laid upon the Table of the House by the end of May, and that the Regulations for Evening Schools will be published by about the same time. The question of the provision of a specific grant for physical training is under consideration.

St. George's, East Bristol, and Wright's Hill, Rowley Regis, Higher Grade Council Schools.

DR. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether it is intended to enforce a £3 per annum fee from parents in the case of the pupils attending the St. George's, East Bristol, higher grade council school and of the pupils attending the Wright's Hill higher grade council school, Rowley Regis, Staffordshire; and whether, in these cases, the Board of Education will leave the local education authorities a wide discretion as to the number of free places to be sanctioned in these schools, and not insist upon a maximum of 25 per cent. of free places.

Sir WILLIAM ANSON: The Board have not required the charging of a £3 fee at the St. George's, East Bristol, secondary school, but have sanctioned the continuance of the existing fee of fivepence per week. There is no application before the Board for the recognition of the Wright's Hill higher grade council school, Rowley Regis, as a secondary school. The application is for its recognition as a higher elementary school. The question as to the number of free places has not arisen.

Bishop of Manchester's Circular to the North of England Education Authorities.

*Mr. HIGHAM (Yorkshire, W.R., Sowerby): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education if he is aware that the Bishop of Manchester has recently sent to a number of education authorities in the North of England a schedule of inquiries in which he asks to be supplied in tabular form with the information as to the number of pupil teachers taken from Church of England schools; denominational privileges granted to pupil teachers in schools or in pupil teachers' centres; undenominational teaching given to pupil teachers; denominational pupil teachers' centres in the area; by whom religious teaching was given; and by whom it was paid for; whether such inquiries have received the sanction of the Board of Education; and whether local education authorities are under any obligation to answer such inquiries.

Sir WILLIAM ANSON: I am not aware of the action of the Bishop of Manchester referred to in the Question. It is obviously for each local authority to decide for themselves how far they will supply the information asked for.

Carisbrooke Church.

Mr. ARTHUR MORTON: I beg to ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, if further restoration of Carisbrooke Church will be postponed in view of the local opposition to the proposal.

Lord BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): My hon. friend refers, I presume, to the Carisbrooke Parish Church. This is a matter which is in no way under the jurisdiction of the Office of Works.

Motor Speed Regulations for the Parks.

Mr. SCOTT-MONTAGU: I beg to ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, if he can now announce the date upon which the High Court will consider the legality of the Park rules under which the speed of motor-cars has been restricted to ten miles an hour.

Lord BALCARRES: The First Commissioner is unable to give this information, but hopes that the case will come on early in next sittings.

Alleged Illegal Treating at Weymouth.

Mr. LYELL (Dorsetshire, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General whether his attention has been directed to a free entertainment given on February 24th last, in the Jubilee Hall, Weymouth, by Mr. T. J. Templeman, the Mayor of Weymouth, President of the South Branch of the Melcombe Regis Conservative Association, and Trustee of the Weymouth Conservative Club, at which entertainment political speeches were delivered by the Mayor, the Member of Parliament for South Dorset, and his election agent, and at which persons, other than Conservatives, were present; and to the fact that previous to the commencement of the entertainment tickets were distributed to those present which entitled the bearer to receive four pennyworth of refreshments during the evening at any licensed house in Weymouth, each ticket being signed by T. J. Templeman, with a note to the effect that it would be honoured if presented at his offices in Mitchell Street by February 27th, 1905; and whether, in view of the provisions of the Corrupt and Illegal

Practices Prevention Acts, he will instruct the Director of Public Prosecutions to institute proceedings.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs): The 45th Section of the Corrupt Practices Act makes it the duty of the Director of Public Prosecutions to take the appropriate proceedings where information is given to him that corrupt or illegal practices have prevailed in reference to any election. It does not appear that any election was pending in the constituency at the time of the entertainment referred to in the Question, and I do not think that it would be proper for the Director of Public Prosecutions to appear to anticipate by any action on his part the effect which it might have on any subsequent election. I may add that while anything in the nature of treating in view of a future election is highly to be deprecated, the question whether proceedings should be taken must depend on the circumstances of each particular case.

MR. LOUGH: How long before an election takes place may it be described as pending?

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: An election is pending when it is going on. It may be imminent before it is pending.

Scottish Church Dispute—Evictions of Ministers and Congregations.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I beg to ask the Lord-Advocate whether he has any information as to the number of cases in which ministers and congregations of the United Free Church of Scotland have been actually evicted from manses and churches at the instance of the Free Church, and as to the number of cases in which proceedings of this nature are pending.

THE LORD-ADVOCATE (Mr. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgton): I am informed that actual possession has been taken of forty-two churches as to which interdict was obtained. I am also informed that the Free Church have obtained possession of between twenty and thirty other churches without legal proceedings. I am unable to say in how many cases the Free Church have taken possession of manses which were occupied by ministers of the United Free Church, but I believe the number is small. I am unable to state the number of cases presently pending. I am endeavouring to obtain further information, and, if I receive it, I will communicate with the hon. Member.

Sneem Traders and Carriage of Goods.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the average amount of goods conveyed by road per week from Kenmare to Sneem; and whether, seeing that goods were so carried to meet the temporary requirements of the Sneem traders when the steamer service was delayed through bad weather, or consisted of goods from Dublin and inland counties which could not avail of the Clyde Shipping Company's service, he will endeavour, in the circumstances, to procure more favourable rates from the railway company.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): The Board have no definite information on which to reply to the first inquiry. They made the best terms possible with the railway company, and cannot now reopen the matter.

MR. BOLAND: I shall take an early opportunity to draw attention to this matter.

Sittings of the Land Commission Appeal Court in Galway.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland when the Land Commission Appeal Court last sat in Galway; and, if, in view of the number of cases listed for hearing, he can say when the Court will sit again.

MR. WALTER LONG: The last sitting was held in May and June, 1904. A further sitting will be arranged for as early a date as possible, having regard to the claims of other districts.

Mr. Arthur O'Connor's Roscommon Estate.

Mr. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the terms of the sale of the estate of Mr. Arthur O'Connor, near Strokestown, county Roscommon, have been approved by the Estates Commissioners, and the partition of the turbary decided on; and, if not, when will the Estates Commissioners be in a position to come to a decision on the matter.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Yes, Sir; the Commissioners have decided to sanction advances for the sale of a portion of this property, which, however, does not include the bog-land. The tenants, who agreed to purchase without the bog-land, have informed the Commissioners that they are willing to stand by their agreements.

Council of the Empire.

Mr. BLACK (Banffshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is contemplated by the Government that, at the projected Colonial Conference, the delegates should be invited to consider the establishment of a Council of the Empire, in which the Motherland and the Colonies should be suitably represented, as a method of cementing the Empire alternative to the adoption of any scheme of unity founded on the taxation of wheat and flour in this country.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): In the opinion of the Government, the Colonial Conference is in itself what the hon. Gentleman describes, a Council of the Empire, and I think that that description of it is a very good one. So much for the first part of his Question. As regards the second part, I have to point out that the establishment of machinery for making recommendations to different parts of the Empire can hardly be regarded as an alternative to some special scheme which the Council itself might propose.

Scottish Church Dispute.

Sir ANDREW AGNEW (Edinburgh, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if special instructions can be given to expedite the printing of the Report of the Royal Commission on the ecclesiastical dispute in Scotland.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have before answered this, but I may add from information I have been able to gather that the Report of the Elgin Commission will be in the hands of Members on Thursday morning.

Mr. BLACK: I beg to ask whether Sir John Cheyne, as Royal Commissioner on questions of interim possession arising between the United Free Church of Scotland and the Free Church of Scotland, has reported; and, if not, whether he will be asked to make an interim Report which will be considered along with the Report of the Elgin Commission.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir. Sir John Cheyne has made no Report; but I see no objection to requesting him to give some account of the proceedings which he has, at the request of the Government, undertaken.

NEW BILLS.

LUNACY ACTS AMENDMENT (LONDON) (No. 2) BILL.

"To authorise the London County Council to provide receiving houses for the reception of persons mentally afflicted or alleged to be of unsound mind, and to authorise the detention of such persons in such houses, and for other purposes connected therewith," presented by Sir John Tuke; supported by Mr. John Burns and Mr. Benn; to be read a second time upon Monday, 8th May, and to be printed. [Bill 184.]

SMALL HOLDINGS (No. 3) BILL.

"To further facilitate the provision of Small Holdings," presented by Mr. Channing; supported by Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Herbert Samuel, Mr. Price, Mr. Bright, Mr. Lyell, Dr. Hutchinson, Mr. George White, and Mr. Slack; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, May 2nd, and to be printed. [Bill 185.]

UNEMPLOYED WORKMEN.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): The origin of the Bill which I have the honour of introducing is to be found in the scheme for dealing with the unemployed in the Metropolis which was started by the right hon. Member for South Bristol who preceded me in my present office. It proposes to establish local bodies in each of the Metropolitan boroughs, and a central body for the whole area, corresponding to the joint committees set up under the scheme of my right hon. friend which, I think, has, by common consent, done its work well. The duty of the local bodies, corresponding to the joint committees of the existing scheme, will be to inquire into cases of applicants for employment, and to divide these applicants into two classes—first, the class honestly desirous of obtaining work but temporarily unable to do so, owing to exceptional causes over which they have no control; and, secondly, applicants who should be regarded as proper subjects for ordinary Poor Law relief. For applicants of the former class it will be the duty of the local bodies to endeavour to obtain employment. The central body will be charged with the general supervision over the local bodies, and also with the establishment of labour exchanges and employment registers. The Bill makes an important distinction between obtaining employment for applicants and providing work for them. The local bodies will have it as one of their functions to endeavour to obtain employment for applicants, but they will not be empowered to provide work for them. They will not be entitled to become themselves employers of labour or to arrange for applicants being employed by other persons in return for contributions to the cost. The provision of work for applicants will be reserved entirely for the central body, and even in the case of the central body it will be entirely discretionary. The central body, of course, will examine into any case referred to them by the local bodies, but it will be within their own discretion to deal with those cases or not. It will be entirely within their own discretion whether they are to provide work for those cases or not; still less, of course, will there be anything in the nature of a claim on the part of applicants themselves to have work provided for them.

I have to note two important differences between this and the scheme at present in operation. The joint committees and the central committee, under the scheme of my right hon. friend the present Chief Secretary for Ireland, were voluntary bodies, and the central fund depended, as a matter of fact, entirely upon voluntary subscriptions. The local bodies and central bodies it is proposed to establish in the Bill will be statutory and permanent bodies, and the central body will be, to a limited extent, and for certain clearly defined objects, entitled to draw upon the rates for its support. The question of whether money of the ratepayers should be used for the purposes contemplated in this Bill is, of course, a very important one, and one which, at a later stage, will, no doubt, receive the full consideration it deserves from the House. I will content myself at this stage with making two remarks upon the question. In the first place, it seems to me it would be impossible to set up statutory bodies, permanent bodies for statutory duties, and leave them entirely dependent upon voluntary subscriptions for their maintenance; and, in the second place, the Government do not disguise from themselves the importance of the new departure they are making. The matter has been carefully considered, and we think, within the limits laid down and subject to the conditions imposed in connection with provisional labour, that the experiment is one which can be made without any undue risk. These limits affect not merely the total amount on which the rates can be drawn upon, but also the objects to which contributions from the rates may be devoted. With regard to the amount, that will be an equalised rate, each Metropolitan borough contributing according to its rateable value, and it will be limited to ½d. in the £, or it may be extended to 1d. in the £ with the special leave of the Local Government Board. No money drawn from the rates may be spent in providing relief works other than those on a farm colony. Speaking broadly, the arrangement comes to this:

the rates may be drawn upon to provide and maintain the regular organisation which the Bill sets up, but the rates may not be drawn upon to provide work otherwise than on a farm colony established by the central body.

There are other provisions of the Bill on which I should like to have said a word had I sufficient time at my disposal. The chief of these is the organisation which is provided outside London, and which differs in certain important particulars from that provided in the Metropolis itself. The organisation outside will be on a much more optional footing. It will not be compulsory either for borough or city councils to set up the organisation which is being provided for London. I cannot go now into the conditions under which work may be provided by the central body and the power of the Local Government Board to make general regulations both for this and other purposes, but when hon. Members get the Bill in their hands I think the provisions that we have made will appear intelligible. In conclusion, I can only express my regret that it is not the lot of the right hon. Member for South Bristol to introduce this measure, of which he is the real parent. If it finds favour with the House, and has the good fortune to pass into law, and if it proves successful in dealing with great evils, then any credit that attaches to that success will be associated with my right hon. friend's name.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to establish organisation with a view to the provision of employment or assistance for Unemployed Workmen in proper cases."—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*)

*Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said he thought he was expressing the general feeling of the House in saying they regretted that the Chief Secretary for Ireland had not himself been able to introduce the Bill, because they knew that last autumn and since he had taken a great personal interest in this important question. It was a little difficult in the very short speech of the right hon. Gentleman to follow exactly what were the proposals of the Bill. But he should like to say, on his own behalf at all events, that he hoped and desired that this question should, as far as possible, not be in any sense a Party question, though, of course, some of them might hold views which went considerably further than those expressed by the right hon. Gentleman. He confessed he had listened with some disappointment to his speech. It appeared to him that the Bill, instead of extending the position and powers of the central body, and of the Local Government Board, as foreshadowed in the scheme of the late President of the Local Government Board, placed limitations and restrictions upon the powers of the central body with regard to the provision of employment and the receipt of funds.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I do not think so. Perhaps I may make it clear. We propose that the central fund should be provided to some extent by voluntary subscriptions, and with regard to those subscriptions that the central body should be able to do everything which the central committee under the scheme of my right hon. friend was enabled to do.

*Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON said that under the existing voluntary scheme of the right hon. Gentleman the central committee not only had the voluntary subscriptions, but it was clearly the intention of the right hon. Gentleman last August to ask the various borough councils to contribute from the rates to the central fund, in order to provide work. Unfortunately, some borough councils declined to do that, and, therefore, that part of the right hon. Gentleman's scheme fell to the ground, and to that extent the benefits derived from it were very largely handicapped last autumn. He confessed that he hoped that under the Bill not only would the borough councils be able to apply the rates for the provision of work in *bona fide* cases, but that the aid from the rates in that respect would not be confined entirely to employing men on farm colonies.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: And organisation.

*MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: And organisation. That was to say that the only work which was to be provided out of the public fund was work on the farm colonies. To that extent he agreed with the Bill, but he should like to see it go further, and to the extent the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary proposed last autumn, viz., that these public funds should not be confined entirely to one simple object, but that the Central Authority should have full discretion as to the mode and method of providing work for *bona fide* unemployed. It appeared to him that the Bill, in these respects, fell short of what he had hoped from it. It was, however, after all, an important fact that a Government, and a Conservative Government, should introduce a Bill of this sort. To his mind this was a great step in advance and a real departure in regard to social legislation. What had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman went to show that, as regarded London, at all events, there was now a definite recognition that there was an obligation on the local authorities, and on some central authority, he would not say to provide work where it was demanded, but to exercise discretion in providing work for those who were suffering from want of employment from no fault of their own. There was the further recognition—an important one—involved in the imposition of a uniform rate, that the poor of London were to be a common charge upon the whole of London. They were to have an equality of burdens as far as they could for this object. This was only what ought to have been done years ago. London was the only great city in the country in which the poor were not a common charge upon the whole town. It was only in London that the burden was heaviest where it ought to be lightest.

On one very important point he could not agree with the Bill. He considered that the system which it was proposed to set up in London should be set up everywhere under equally advantageous circumstances. Nothing would be more fatal than to set up a compulsory system in London and not an equally compulsory system throughout the rest of the country. He was afraid if this were done, that last state of London would be worse than the first. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman's mind would be open to suggestions which, as far as he was concerned, would be made in no hostile spirit to the general principle and object of the Bill, suggestions such as those for making it compulsory in the outside districts as well as in London; and to improve the Bill in other respects. He was somewhat disappointed with what appeared to him to be the limitations contained in the Bill. Many of them on that side of the House, indeed all of them, were favourable to some proposal of this sort; and he would appeal to the right hon. Gentlemen to meet them in regard to reasonable Amendments in a friendly spirit in order that this might be made a practicable and working measure, capable of achieving the purpose which he was sure the whole House desired.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the relief will be considered as Poor Law relief?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No, Sir.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Gerald Balfour, Mr. Walter Long, and Mr. Grant Lawson

UNEMPLOYED WORKMEN BILL.

"To establish organisation with a view to the provision of employment or assistance for Unemployed Workmen in proper cases," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 3rd May, and to be printed. [Bill 186.]

ALIENS.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): I do not think that I need offer any apology for bringing forward a Bill dealing with the regulations respecting the admission of aliens into this country. What has taken place since last year has more than proved that the provision of regulations with regard to the admission of undesirable aliens is an extremely pressing question, and during that time the problem has certainly become more acute. I am afraid I must trouble the House with one or two statistics, but they will be very few. During the year 1904 as many as 195,000 aliens were returned as having come to this country. Of these, 99,000 odd were described as transmigrants, and 12,000 as sailors. Though the destination of the remaining 82,000 was not definitely known, some of them were known to have gone to America, but the greater proportion probably settled in this country. [Cries of "Oh, oh!"] I do not want, on this occasion, to treat this matter as controversial, but I have read the speeches of hon. Gentlemen opposite in which they have been able to prove to their own satisfaction that a minus quantity remained on these shores. Certainly that is not the information which reaches me through the Government Departments from sources open to all Members of the House. [Renewed cries of "Oh, oh!"] If hon. Members do not desire to have the figures I will not give them, but I can prove perfectly well at a later stage that the number of undesirable aliens coming to this country has increased, and that it has not only increased during the past year, but the statistics of the last three months show a very large increase over the statistics of the three corresponding months in 1904. The evils which these aliens bring in their train—overcrowding, living in insanitary conditions, the lowering of the general standard of life and morality, and crime—have also, unfortunately, increased. There is no doubt about these facts. The criminal statistics show that alien crime has steadily increased in this country, both absolutely and relatively to the total prison population. In 1900 3,130 alien prisoners were received in our prisons, and in 1904 the number was 4,774. I have received complaints not only from recorders, not only from the London stipendiary magistrates, who have very largely to deal with cases of aliens, but also from Judges of the High Courts, as to the large amount of work, and, I think, unnecessary work, cast upon them by the presence of this class of criminal. Last year I am aware certain Members of the Opposition made an offer on the Grand Committee that they would accept that portion of the Bill which dealt with criminal aliens, but that offer was not unanimous. [Cries of "Yes."] It was distinctly said by some that they would oppose the Bill, and even that portion of it.

MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): It was not opposed in the House by a single Member.

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I beg the hon. Member's pardon; I have the report here of what took place. I gathered from the speeches of the right hon. Member for East Fife and the right hon. Member for Stirling Burghs, the Leader of the Opposition, that they were prepared to accept a Bill of this sort, providing that it was limited in this respect. I could not accept last year that proposition, neither can I accept it this year, as it would only deal with one aspect of the question. We are determined to deal with this organised traffic in undesirable aliens, and we cannot limit it to an expulsion from this country of those who come within the scope of the Courts of law in this country. If hon. Members will look at the statistical table issued by the Board of Trade, they will see that the great bulk of this traffic comes from eight ports in the country. There are twenty-nine ports from which the returns are taken, but something like 97 per cent. of the aliens came to eight ports, extending from Leith to Southampton. It is this wholesale immigration at these ports which we intend to control, and at these ports our machinery will be set up, and at these ports only immigrant ships will be allowed to land aliens. We do not propose in any way to hamper the *bona fide* transmigrant; he is especially exempted from the restrictions imposed upon other alien immigrants.

As regards the actual provisions of the Bill, it deals with the landing of undesirable aliens. It provides that no immigrant shall be landed from an immigrant ship except at ports where there is an immigrant officer appointed under the Act, and without the leave of that immigrant officer, given after he has made an inspection in company with a medical inspector. In cases where leave to land has been refused the immigrant or the master of the ship may appeal to a board appointed at each port; and this board is to consist of three persons, of whom one shall be a magistrate, the others having experience of Poor Law and administrative matters. We hope thus to obtain the co-operation of the Jewish Board of Guardians, in order that the interests of that community—especially in London, where it is very large—may be properly respected. And we provide in this Bill that an immigrant shall be considered undesirable, and, as such, may be refused permission to land in this country if he cannot show that he has, or is in a position to obtain, the means of supporting himself in decent sanitary conditions; if he is a lunatic or an idiot; if, owing to disease or infirmity, he is likely to become a charge upon the rates or otherwise detrimental to the public; if he has been sentenced abroad for an extraditable crime, not being of a political character; or if he has been previously expelled under this Act. The landing of an alien shall not be refused, however, if he proves that he is seeking admission solely to avoid prosecution for an offence of a political character.

The second part of the Bill deals with the expulsion of undesirable aliens already in our midst. To secure this the Secretary of State may make an expulsion order requiring an alien to leave the United Kingdom within a time he fixes, and thereafter to remain out of it; but the Secretary of State can only act on the certificate of a Court of law, including a Court of summary jurisdiction, if he is satisfied that the alien has been convicted for an offence for which he can be imprisoned without the option of a fine, and that the Court recommends the expulsion either in addition to or in lieu of the sentence which he receives. Then, again, the alien may be sent out of the country if a certificate is given to the Secretary of State by a Court of summary jurisdiction within twelve months after the last entrance to this country of the alien, showing that the alien has, within three months, been in receipt of parochial relief of such a character as would disqualify him for the Parliamentary franchise, which is a condition very well known, or within three months has been wandering without means of subsistence, or has been living under insanitary conditions due to overcrowding, or that he has been convicted of an extradition crime abroad. The Secretary of State, further, has the power to meet the expenses of the deportation of the alien, but such expenses he can recover from the master of the ship who brought the alien if the expulsion order is made on a certificate within six months of his landing. Further, this principle will not only extend to the shipowner or the master of the ship, but to that particular line of ship. Then, the obligations which fall on the master of any ship at the present time to make a return will be continued, but those returns will have to be made in a more exhaustive and accurate manner than now.

This, very shortly, is the Bill I ask leave to introduce. I cannot say, of course, how it will be received by this House, but I trust that the same opposition which was given to the Bill last year may not be extended to it this year. I venture to think that the feeling in favour of some legislation, not only to expel criminal aliens, but to restrict the immigration into this country of undesirable aliens, has very considerably increased since last year. If that is the case, I trust that that feeling will be reflected in this House, and that a desire will be shown to deal comprehensively with this question, and prevent this country being made a receptacle for destitute, diseased, and criminal aliens.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Law with regard to Aliens."—(*Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*)

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said the Home Secretary had given the House the statistics, roughly speaking, upon which his case for the Bill was based. The House might remember that last year he gave the House statistics of a similar character which had to be entirely altered, cut down to a tenth in consequence of his attention being called to the Report of the Board of Trade.

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I beg the hon. Gentleman's pardon. I gave the whole figures, and I admitted afterwards that I had not taken off figures for sailors. This year they have been taken off.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE: No, Sir, the figures have not been so corrected as to meet the objection of last year. Proceeding, he said he would challenge the Secretary of State to produce to the House before the Second Reading the annual Return, in the same form as produced after the Second Reading of the Bill last year, of Emigration and Immigration. They were never told last year, even in the reduced figures—the Home Office appeared to take a different view from the Board of Trade—what the Report was; but it was laid upon the Table and circulated after the debates. It was pointed out that whilst they were told by the Home Office that there was an increasing number of aliens settling in this country, the Board of Trade reported in April, 1904, that the total admissions in 1903 were decidedly less than in 1902. The figures decreased last year so enormously that the suggestion that the right hon. Gentleman had made, that some opponents of the Bill had arrived at a minus quantity, was not made by any Member of the House; it was made by the Board of Trade. If the House would look at the last Return they would find that the figures of the Board of Trade, after the deduction for seamen, reduced the total number settling in this country down to a few hundreds. He saw that the hon. and gallant Member for Stepney laughed, but he was not giving figures on his own authority, but on the authority of the Board of Trade. He was referring to documents circulated to Members as the highest authority on this subject, and as an annual Return corresponding with the Census Returns and which were unanimously adopted by the Royal Commission of which the hon. and gallant Member was a member.

*Major EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I wish to say at this point that the calculations just mentioned are perfectly familiar to me, and that the deductions the right hon. Baronet draws from them are entirely and utterly erroneous.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE said the deductions were drawn by the Royal Commission. The census figures and the Board of Trade Returns agreed, both were approved by the Royal Commission, and they entirely over-rode the figures given by the Home Secretary. The Home Secretary, after dealing with these figures—and he, the right hon. Baronet, disputed them *in toto* on the authority of the Returns of the Board of Trade—turned to the offer which was then made to deal with crime. He stated that the offer concerned, as he understood him, only a single point, that they were to limit the Bill to those who came within the scope of the criminal Courts of this country. This was not the offer. There was a double offer as regarded crime, and that offer was distinctly renewed by the Member for East Fife in his speech at Reading. Two offers were made, and the Home Secretary had only alluded to one. He said it was not a unanimous offer; but a Bill was brought into this House by some Members who had actively opposed the Government Bill, and it was only blocked by Members opposite. Then the Home Secretary came to the changes which had been made in the new Bill. The Bill was introduced under the Ten Minutes Rule. It was the principal Bill of the year; it was first in the list named in the King's Speech; and it was entirely different from the Bill of last year, being stronger in some points and weaker in others. It was introduced under the Ten Minutes Rule without the possibility of discussion in the House, whereas the Party opposite insisted upon a two days debate in 1894 on the introduction of the Welsh Church Bill, and two days debate on the same Bill in 1895, although this Bill was quite as novel a departure from the principles of the legislation of the country as the Welsh Church Bill could be said to be after the disestablishment of the Irish Church. The Bill of last year broke down hopelessly on the police evidence before the Royal Commission; it killed the Bill, and the proof of this was that there was no attempt now to be made to interfere with the excursion traffic for French workmen to Folkestone, and

Dover, The Home Secretary proposed to confine the operation of the Bill to certain immigrant ports, and to force the immigrant to come into those ports. This was entirely contrary to the character of the Bill of last year. The Home Secretary had been mild in his language to-day as to what was going to happen in the discussion on the Bill, but the hon. and gallant Member for Stepney had not been so mild, and he would like the House to notice what the hon. and gallant Member for Stepney, the chief friend and supporter of the Bill, had said as to the manner in which the Bill was to be passed through the House. He said on Wednesday night last that he had it from the Prime Minister that the Bill would be introduced to-day, that there would be no reference to Grand Committee this year; the Prime Minister would put into operation the closure and all the weapons the Government possessed. He was quoting from the *Morning Post.*

***Major EVANS GORDON**: I cannot admit the accuracy of that report.

***Sir CHARLES DILKE**: I am glad, because it would have been in the nature of a threat to the House.

Major EVANS GORDON: I prefaced that remark by saying that I hoped that all the machinery at the disposal of the Government would be used to pass the Bill. I adhere to that hope. I did not commit the Prime Minister at all.

***Sir CHARLES DILKE** said he was glad the report was contradicted, because in the Bill of last year all the important parts came last, and, if there were to be any attempt to closure such a Bill, it might easily occur that principles wholly new to English law and impossible in working operation would be passed through the House without any discussion, and that would be a monstrous wrong. The Home Secretary had to-day avoided altogether one of the mistakes into which the Government fell last year. Last year there was an absolute violation of the recent principles of our law by the quarantine proposals of the Bill. He had said nothing with regard to the admission of sick and diseased people this year. Last year the Bill was entirely opposed to the Act of 1896 and to the Orders of the Local Government Board, and he assumed the quarantine portion of the Bill had now been dropped, and that all the proposals likely to interfere with the cross-Channel traffic had been withdrawn. The Home Secretary made no reply, but it was a matter on which they ought to have early information. As far as he could see, it would be necessary for them to oppose the Bill, to take again the course they took last year in dividing against it on the Second Reading; and he proposed, if no one else did so, to oppose the Second Reading upon two grounds. On the ground that the Bill would interfere with the principle of asylum in this country without any proved necessity for taking any such step. The right of asylum was never more needed than it was at the present time, in the state of affairs in East Europe known to every man in the House. There was, in 1903, the last year for which they had the Board of Trade Return, no increase of alien population in this country, and the alien population was trifling as compared with the alien population of every other country in the world. At this moment France had just extended to the Italian workmen, who were more numerous by far in France than all workmen of all foreign countries were in England. the whole of the old-age pensions provisions, the whole of the insurance provisions of their law, and this by treaty. It would be a retrograde step, unworthy of this country, to adopt these means of restriction and exclusion in face of an evil, which, except in a district here and there, was trifling. And if they took this view with regard to victims of persecution, and with regard to the right of asylum here, they took it with regard to the other portions of the offer made by them with regard to sweating in certain trades. The view of those trades was that the evils complained of should be dealt with by anti-sweating legislation; and it was by this means they would seek to combat the evil against which this Bill professed to be directed.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas, Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. Attorney-General, Mr. Cochrane, and Mr. Bonar Law.

ALIENS BILL.

"To amend the Law with regard to Aliens," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, May 2nd, and to be printed. [Bill 187.]

SUPPLY (CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES).

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [April 13th], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair (for Committee on Civil Services and Revenue Departments Estimates)."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

Question again proposed.

*Mr. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.) said that in order to make it clear what issues he wished to raise and what demands he wished to make upon the Board of Trade, although he was not able to ask that a Motion should be read from the Chair, he would give the terms of the Motion he would have moved had he been in a position to do so. It would have called the attention of the House to the Acts for the prevention of accidents on railways and to the working hours of railway servants; and it would have expressed the opinion of the House that the powers vested in the Board of Trade should be more effectively exercised; that experiments should be forthwith carried out as to automatic and non-automatic couplings; and that the Board of Trade should take action under the Railway Regulation Act, 1893, to check excessive hours of labour, whether information was derived from representations, Returns, or otherwise.

He said he would remind the House of the determination of successive Parliaments that the question of the safety of men working on railways should be dealt with by the Board of Trade. A Bill identical in principle with the Bill passed in 1900 passed its Second Reading as long ago as 1886. The Return issued by the Board of Trade with regard to fatal and non-fatal accidents in relation to shunting operations, including coupling and uncoupling during the last ten years, showed that during the ten years covered by the Return the fatal and non-fatal accidents occurring to the 19,000 or 20,000 servants employed by the railways for this work practically equalled the number of servants employed during that time. That was a most tremendous fact. So far as he could see, there had been no substantial and sweeping reduction in the number of these accidents in shunting and coupling and uncoupling. For the year 1903 the Return showed—deaths, twenty-three, and other accidents, 506; while for the year 1900 the figures were, deaths, twenty-five, and other accidents, 505. So that the figures now were practically the same as when Parliament sanctioned the extension of these powers to the Board of Trade. He did not wish to take a partisan or extreme view of the action of the Board of Trade. He was glad to recognise that the appointment of sub-inspectors had led to an increase in the number of inquiries and that, in inquiries made by some of their inspectors, there had been a tendency to look more minutely into the minor causes of accidents, but he pressed upon the Secretary to the Board of Trade and the House the necessity of making the intentions of Parliament, which in this case went back nineteen years, operative, and of preventing many of the deaths and non-fatal accidents on our railways.

With regard to the question of railway hours the point he wished to raise was a very simple one, and he thought that the hon. Gentleman would say it was a clear one. So far as this Act was concerned, the Board of Trade relied wholly and entirely on the complaints made by railway servants as to the number of hours which they had worked. So far as he was concerned, he had taken a very great interest in this matter, and he had not heard of any action taken by them on their own initiative. So far as he knew, the whole pivot of this Act was the representations made by the men whose hours of labour were excessive. Now when one looked at the competition for railway employment, and to the fact that a man having once entered that service naturally wanted to rise, it was not to be expected that many men would complain and make these representations where there was a serious risk—if they were known to complain of the system under which they worked—of their incurring disability and loss of promotion, if they did not incur dismissal. The Act of Parliament expressly contemplated action by the Board of Trade on other grounds, and he ventured to say that action ought to be taken with regard to the excessive hours of work.

He had taken the trouble to analyse the results of the last Return, and he would at once admit that since he made a Motion in 1891 on this subject there had been a considerable reduction in the number of instances of excessive hours worked. But he asked the House to consider the figures which resulted from this analysis, and ask themselves whether this was the result which Parliament contemplated as the outcome of the Hours' Act of 1893. The Return was not based on the recommendations of the right hon. Member for West Bristol, who presided over the Committee to inquire into the excess of hours worked on railways. This and similar Returns had been based on a twelve hours day, so that if a ten hours day basis was taken, as was laid down by the right hon. Member for West Bristol on that occasion, there would be a far greater amount of overwork shown. But what did they now find. They found that the number of goods guards, brakesmen, engine-drivers and firemen (and it was they who worked these long hours) who worked over twelve hours a day on the chief railways of the country during this time was close on 28,000; the number of instances upon which these 28,000 men were compelled to work between twelve and fifteen hours continuously was 52,799; and the number of instances they had to work fifteen hours at a stretch was 5,273. In these days one would have thought it impossible that men should work more than eighteen hours but he found there were no less than 258 such cases. So far as he could see there had been no improvement whatsoever since 1901. One particular point to which he desired to draw attention was the extraordinarily good figures of the North Western Company in this regard. When he drew attention to this question two years ago, he found from the figures that while the other railways showed percentages of overwork ranging from 80 to 97 per cent., the North Western showed only 13 per cent. of goods guards and 22·46 per cent. of drivers and firemen. In the last Return the figures of all the other railway companies but the North Western were practically as bad as they were two years ago. But the North Western had further improved their figures and actually showed now only ·79 of overwork among their goods guards and 2·42 of drivers, more than ten times better than two years before. They were faced with this extraordinary fact, that there was this great Department of State especially authorised by Parliament to deal with this evil, and yet it was neither ameliorated nor redressed by any of the railway companies, and that when the Department had this object lesson of one of the lines carrying out the necessary reforms. It was a great evil, and he called on the hon. Gentleman to consider whether with such information as was available he could not do something to remedy it. How was it that the Board of Trade did nothing to bring about a better state of things? This last Return disclosed the identical state of things which existed previously. He apologised to the House for having detained it at such length, but as he had given a great deal of attention to this question, and as he had taken part in Parliament in obtaining for the Board of Trade these powers, he thought it only right that they should be put into force.

*Mr. BELL (Derby) said the subject now under discussion in connection with the Acts of 1893 and 1900 was of such great importance to the railway men of the country that it was worthy of much greater consideration than it usually received. Hon. Members opposite had endeavoured to demonstrate, by the enthusiasm with which they welcomed the Aliens Bill that they were particularly interested in the working classes, and desired to protect their interests. If that enthusiasm was real, he suggested they should show it in a practical manner in connection with the section of working men whom he represented, for if any class of workers required and deserved protection they did. The Act of 1893, giving power to the Board of Trade to regulate the hours of railway men, was enacted after a Royal Commission had sat for two years, and one or two strikes had taken place. The evidence they received was such that their recommendations were of a strong and important character. The Act based on those recommendations gave the Board of Trade power to call for Returns, and, on receipt of those Returns, if necessary to order a revision of the hours. Railway companies were very keen on having their requests and desires promptly attended to, but, when they were called upon by the Board of Trade to render Returns, Parliament had generally to wait practically a year before the information was received. Railway directors in the House would probably find it difficult to believe some of the statements he was about to make, but he had never yet made a statement in Parliament without being able to verify it, and directors could not and were not expected to be able to go into every detail connected with the management of a great concern such as a railway. That duty was rightly entrusted to subordinate officials.

The Secretary to the Board of Trade would probably say that the Department were always ready to act upon information or complaints received. That was true, but they were generally a long time concluding their inquiries. Moreover, too many railway men had just cause to fear making complaints. Communications might be made through him to the Board of Trade, and the Department would not know from whom the complaints came, but most of the men were known to their local officials, and he would give the House examples of what happened to men who were even suspected of having made complaints. It was difficult for the officials to know definitely that a man had lodged a complaint with the Department, but they were keenly observant. If a man showed discontent with his hours, perhaps lodging a complaint with his superior, and then subsequently the Board of Trade made inquiries as to the hours of that particular depôt, the officials at once concluded that that man was the cause of the Board's action, and he would probably suffer for it. Owing to the great development in the size and power of locomotives and the increased length of goods and mineral trains, the responsibilities of these men had enormously increased, and the companies ought therefore to recognise the absolute necessity of curtailing the hours during which they had to work. He knew cases where, during the hot weather, firemen were so exhausted at the close of a twelve hours day, having to fire from five to seven tons of coal in addition to the ordinary duties of a stoker, that they were unable to walk home, and sometimes had had to be sent home in a cab. Such a state of things was not in the interests either of the men or of the public. If men, through insufficient rest, declined to resume duty when called upon, they were penalised by being compelled to stand off for two or three days, and to lose the corresponding pay, while if they resumed duty, they were directly requested by the officials to falsify their "bookings on" in order that the Board of Trade might be deceived. In one case a man was on duty, with a short interval, from 6.30 a.m., until midnight. He was asked to make out two separate time sheets, so that he would not be entered on the Return as having been eighteen hours on duty.

MR. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.): What railway was that?

*MR. BELL said he would have preferred not mentioning the railways, but if hon. Members desired the names he would give them. The case he had just mentioned was on the Great Central. Another case occurred on the Great Western, where a man was called on duty after only eight hours ten minutes rest. He complained of the insufficiency of the period of rest, but, pressed by the foreman, he went on duty. He was then requested to sign on as having had the full nine hours rest, and naturally, when such requests were made by a foreman, they were more often acceded to than not, because if the men refused they would doubtless be duly rewarded. Then in connection with the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway he received a report that during January and February, goods guards were on duty for thirty-nine hours at a stretch.

Sir FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham): This year?

*Mr. BELL: Yes. Another practice was to put cleaners of from sixteen to nineteen years of age on engines to do firing duty after they had done their day's work in the cleaning sheds. In one case a cleaner was on duty twenty-one consecutive hours, twelve in the shed being followed by nine on an engine. Another was on duty twenty-four hours, twelve in the shed and twelve on the road. In other cases fourteen and a-half hours (entirely on locomotives), and seventeen and a-half hours were put in. He had given to him the name of one cleaner who, with wages of 3s. a day, drew at the end of a week eleven and a quarter days wages, showing that he had almost worked the week round so far as hours were concerned. He was sure that no Member of the House would desire to defend such practices. The reason why the Return which the hon. Member asked for did not contain this information was because the cleaner was not reported as having worked twenty-one hours on duty, because whilst in the shed as a cleaner there would be no report, and, therefore, twelve hours on the locomotive is what would appear in the Return. He was bound to say that he felt very strongly upon this matter, and he had determined to get it altered by any means whatever. The Department, as a rule, was very sympathetic with railway companies, and more so than any other Department. These irregularities on the part of railway companies were nearly always overlooked, no matter how great their sins, whereas a small employer who omitted to put a small fence around the fly wheel in his engine room would be summoned before the local Courts and fined.

He knew of two cases of railway companies who had deliberately deceived the Board of Trade. One was the case of an Irish railway company where the permanent way of one of their lines was in such a bad state that an accident occurred to a goods train and the brake van went off the line and rolled down the embankment and disabled the guard. That railway company never reported the case at all to the Board of Trade, and nine months after the accident he put a Question to the President of the Board of Trade, and it was ultimately admitted that the accident had happened and that it was an oversight on the part of the company in not reporting it. He could not accept that as an excuse. The very same railway company in connection with the working hours of signalmen had adopted a practice for nearly twelve months of working eight hours signalmen for twelve hours regular shift. When the Board of Trade asked for a schedule this company told them that these were twelve hour boxes, but this was not so, for they were eight hour shift men who had been systematically worked twelve hours. This was important, because a railway company would never put signalmen on an eight hour shift if they were convinced that the Board of Trade would not interfere. Having made the admission that eight hours in a particular cabin or yard was sufficient it was evident that a man should not be called upon to work 50 per cent. longer upon his day's work. The final result was that after nearly twelve or fifteen months negotiation between the Department, the railway company, and himself, the railway company had appointed a third man in order to avoid working twelve hours in the future.

There had been an inquest at a place near Shrewsbury in the case of an accident to a man who was some kind of an overseer, and it appeared that this man was in the habit of working something like fifteen hours or fifteen and a half hours each day, although his ordinary duties scheduled were from 6.30 a.m. to 6.30 p.m., but he had to remain on duty until the whole work was completed, and he was habitually on duty until 9 or 9.30 at night. At the time of the accident he was working his fourth day, and it was true that he had not been at work those long hours on the day when he met with his accident. At the inquest his widow stated in evidence that the night before the accident deceased complained to her of being almost too tired to go to bed, having been on duty fifteen and a half hours or upwards. On the day of the accident the man who took his place had also been on duty fifteen and a half hours. He feared that these facts were not reported as they should be, and this was one of those items which it was difficult for him to prove to the contrary, although he knew many instances of the kind he had enumerated, and which he was perfectly satisfied were not included in the Return. Consequently he felt that the Return was not a correct one of the number of hours worked by the railway men of this country.

To prove that the men dare nt complain with any certainty that they would not be interfered with he would mention the instance of a guard employed on the North British Railway. In this instance a guard having worked over twelve hours was asked to pick up traffic at a particular siding and he declined to do so because he had been on duty so many hours. The result was that he was suspended for two days for refusing to pick up this traffic. The North British Railway Company had actually dismissed a signalman for insubordination, which consisted of a statement that he was not going to continue to work those long hours without making a bit of a fuss. This man did make a fuss and the Board of Trade compelled the North British Railway to appoint another man in this particular cabin, and after this had been done the man who made the fuss was dismissed for insubordination. Instances of this kind were very numerous, and he could quote them by yards.

What he desired was that the powers conferred by the Board of Trade should be used to the fullest extent, and this would make it unnecessary for any men to have to lodge a complaint. He had had to fight very hard to get the first Return in 1901, and that Return showed a startling lot of figures, although the President of the Board of Trade denied that such long hours were worked on the railways. Even the Report published about August each year of the number of complaints made under the Act of 1893 showed but a very few cases, although the Return for 1901 showed 397,000 instances of men having worked over thirteen hours duty during the month of December in that year. No less than 96,000 of these worked over fourteen hours, 56,000 over fifteen hours, 29,000 over sixteen hours, 14,000 over seventeen hours, and 21,000 over eighteen hours. This took place in the running of goods and mineral trains in this country. For the year 1902 the Return showed a considerable decrease, and perhaps the House would remember that he protested against the President of the Board of Trade giving the companies three months warning that he was going to call for a Return for December next. With regard to the special effort alleged to have been put forward by the railway companies to the effect that under no circumstances would the men be allowed to work over twelve hours, he had brought many of the orders and instructions forward and discussed them, and he had forwarded them also to the President of the Board of Trade. During the month of December, 1903, these hours were reduced to 75,389. That was how the railway companies desired to make it appear for that particular month for which the Return was going to be called for, and their idea was to show that the hours were not very excessive. Some of the railway companies thought they were going to make this Return an annual thing for December, and an effort was made in November last year to reduce the hours for December. He, however, thought that he would like a change, and so he asked for a Return for October, 1903. This Return showed a considerable increase, and during December letters of explanation were forthcoming from the general managers of the various railway companies showing that the excess was due to the heavy Xmas traffic, fogs, and bad weather. For the month of October the hours above thirteen worked by the men engaged in running trains increased from 75,000 in December, 1902, to 99,000 for October, 1903. In this case there was not the excuse either of Xmas traffic or of the fog. October was at the end of the summer, when the summer traffic was off, and before the winter traffic was taken up; and, therefore, the question of bad weather, fogs, and snowstorms did not come in. But even in face of these facts the excessive hours had increased from 75,000 to 99,000.

The Secretary to the Board of Trade conceded to him the other day a Return that he had asked for March this year. Having asked for that Return for March he hoped they would have it in less time than eleven months hence. Surely the railway companies could not be classed as people who kept no records, and it could not be said that they could not give this information. All these figures were at their disposal, and they could give the information quickly enough if they chose, and if they wanted it for their own purposes they could give the figures within a month; but when they were wanted for the purposes of that House the companies hesitated about giving the information. What he would suggest was that if the President of the Board of Trade did not get these Returns within a reasonable time — which he should put down as not more than two months—that the House should be furnished with a list of those companies who had not supplied Returns. He could not see anything wrong in that course, and it could be quite easily done. He hoped the Board of Trade would obtain a Return with regard to hours and act upon it. Why wait for individual complaints from the men or from him, when there were 99,000 cases admitted by the railway companies themselves? Why not act upon that? If the hon. Gentleman would only appreciate how keenly the men felt these excessive hours, and how injurious they were to the interests of the travelling public, it would not require much pressure from the House to get the Department to do its duty in that connection.

He was not going to say anything on the subject of automatic couplings, as that had been fully dealt with by the hon. Member for East Northamptonshire. But he was not going to allow the question of accidents to railway servants to escape attention in this House. He had collected from the Board of Trade Returns for last year the figures with reference to four grades in which accidents were heaviest—engine-drivers, firemen, goods guards, and shunters. There were employed in these four grades altogether 76,188 men. During the course of last year there were 101 of them killed, or one in 754. There were 2,093 injured, or one in thirty-six of the men employed in these grades. This was a scandal, and the House ought not to tolerate it. He had complained, and he would continue to complain, until an end was put to this condition of matters. There were thousands of these accidents preventable, and only proper administration was required by the Board of Trade—action similar to that with which the Home Office administered the Acts for the protection of workers in workshops and mines. He was positive that with proper administration thousands of accidents would be avoided. The factories and workshops of railway companies were subject to the supervision of the Home Office inspectors In these workshops and factories there were 81,440 employed—5,000, in round figures, more than were employed in the four grades he had mentioned. While 101 were killed in the four grades, only eighteen were killed in the factories and workshops of the great railways. In the same factories and workshops there were forty-three injured, while 2,093 were injured in the four grades embracing what were called "railway men." Why was it that the railway companies should object to have their shunting yards inspected any more than their workshops and factories? He had always urged that the Board of Trade should exercise their powers. It was not enough simply to inquire into the cause of an accident after a man had lost his leg or his head. They should see that the orders and instructions issued for the protection and safety of life and limb were properly fulfilled. He knew the hon. Gentleman would say that it was quite unnecessary to have this kind of inspection, and that the railway companies were sufficiently interested in the safety of their men. He did not charge the railway companies with being more inhuman than any other employers, but did this differential treatment not signify that railway directors were the only people who had any regard for their workmen, and that the State must not interfere and say that they had to take proper precautions to protect the lives of their workmen?

In 1902 the Department issued a series of rules to railway companies to which the men attached very great importance, and they would be very much appreciated if properly carried out. But they had been simply lying as it were on the the table of the President of the Board of Trade and in the offices of the railway companies. No one seemed to trouble about them. For instance, one of the rules said—

> "After the expiration of twelve months from the coming into operation of these rules, the movement of vehicles by means of a prop or pole, being the operation commonly known as 'propping' shall not take place, except in cases where no other reasonably practical means can be provided for dealing with the traffic."

There was another section of the rules dealing with tow-roping in the same way. Immediately these rules were issued to railway companies he sent half a dozen or more lists of sidings and other places on different railways where tow-roping or "propping" must not take place, unless authorised by the general managers. What did the general managers do? They authorised every siding on the railway, and in the case of one company a siding where tow-roping and propping had been abandoned for six years was included as one of the authorised places. He supposed that what the railway companies had done was satisfactory to the Board of Trade. Another order was in the following terms—

> "All engines and tenders must, within two years from the coming into operation of these rules, be fitted with sufficient power brakes, in addition to hand brakes."

What did the Board know as to whether the rule had been carried out? He presumed that the Secretary of the Board of Trade could not tell him whether or not the whole of the locomotives on the railways of this country were provided with power brakes in accordance with this particular section. The hon. Gentleman had been good enough to promise him a Return with regard to this matter. He would not go into the whole of the rules, but he would point out that they required that certain specific things should be done within two years, twelve months, or three years. What he desired to know from the hon. Gentleman was how he was to satisfy himself that these rules had been complied with, if he had no one to go and see that they were carried out. Section 10 of the rules said—

> "In any case where it is shown to the Board of Trade that for any sufficient cause the time within which any of the above rules or regulations have to be carried into effect should be extended, the Board of Trade may from time to time grant such extension upon such terms and conditions as they may think fit."

That meant that the railway companies who were unable to comply with these rules should apply to the Board of Trade for an extension of time. He felt satisfied that many of the trunk lines could not fulfil the obligations placed upon them in the time allowed by these rules, even if they were pretty active about them. The great trunk lines could hardly find it possible to put power brakes on all their locomotives within two years. He recently asked the hon. Gentleman how many companies had made application for an extension of time with reference to these rules. The hon. Gentleman, replying to his Question, said—

> "It is not possible to state in detail what has been the action of railway companies in carrying out the statutory rules. The Board are ready to make inquiry into cases where it is alleged that the rules are not observed. Three companies have applied for extension under Rule 10—the Metropolitan District, and Dublin, Wicklow and Wexford in respect to Rule 5, and the Brecon and Merthyr in respect to Rule 3."

He had an idea that the reason of the Metropolitan District Railway Company was that they were introducing electricity in place of steam. He did not know whether the same reason applied to the Dublin and Wicklow Railway and the Brecon and Merthyr Railway. He was not going to quibble as to whether the reasons given were satisfactory or not. What he wanted to know was whether the Board of Trade were satisfied that all the other railway companies had complied with the whole of the sections in these rules, and if not why had time been allowed to slip by without their applying in terms of Section 10 for an extension of time? It appeared to him that there was nothing more transparent than the fact that these rules had practically all the force of an Act of Parliament. What did the hon. Gentleman and his Department propose to do in order that the instructions might be observed in a more satisfactory way than they seemed to have been of late?

In conclusion, he desired to say that it did seem to him that the Department was not as active as it ought to be. It did seem strange that if a complaint were lodged with the Home Office, a very few weeks, and in some instances, a few days, sufficed to have the whole job done, and the grievance removed, while if they made a complaint to the Board of Trade it had to hang on in some instances for years. He made a complaint to the chief factory inspector for one of the districts on March 29th this year, and a reply was received, dated April 5th, that the place had been inspected and that the owners of the siding had agreed to remove the cause of complaint. Nothing could have been more expeditious than that. He wrote to the Board of Trade in connection with a complaint as to tow-roping on October 13th, 1903, and on various occasions the Department had been reminded of it afterwards. On the 11th of this month the Board stated that they still had the matter under negotiation with the railway company. Now from October, 1903, to April, 1905, was, in his opinion, far too long a time to take to settle a matter of this kind. If the Board of Trade exercised their powers and made an example in one or two instances, he ventured to think that greater attention would be given to these complaints. The hon. Member might say that he was always ready to act on complaints which were forwarded to the Board of Trade, but the men got sick and tired of making complaints which resulted in nothing being done. They said, "What is the use of bothering the Board of Trade; they do not do anything when we do lodge complaints. What we want is that these rules should be carried out. If we are to have the benefit of these protective laws, then we should have them carried out, just as under the Aliens Bill." Somebody would have to be appointed to see that the rules prescribed under it were carried out." This was a very important matter, and he could not apologise for bringing it forward when he knew that hundreds of men were killed and thousands injured by neglect of the rules. Whatever compensation the railway companies might pay in money, that was no true compensation to widows and children for the loss or maiming for life of husband and father. To him, life and limb appeared to be a greater importance than they were to the Board of Trade; and he insisted that the figures he had quoted were sufficient justification for his demanding greater activity in the future from the Board of Trade.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BONAR LAW, Glasgow, Blackfriars) said he was sure the Board of Trade had no reason to complain of the speeches of the hon. Gentlemen who had spoken on this subject. Both hon. Gentlemen had brought forward their complaints in a very moderate way, and in answering them he should endeavour to be as brief as he could. There was, however, one general remark made by the hon. Member for Northamptonshire to which he wished to take exception. The hon. Gentleman stated that the railway administration of the Board of Trade had been much more lax since the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon had ceased to be President of the Board of Trade. He could not understand why the hon. Gentleman should have made that statement. If he had carried the House back to 1894 he might have understood him; but why should he select one Unionist Member rather than another.

MR. CHANNING said he had always paid the highest honour to the right hon. Gentleman; but he had not observed that the Board of Trade had done anything since he left it.

MR. BONAR LAW said that the right hon. Member for Croydon was no longer a member of the Government, and he very much doubted whether the hon. Gentleman would have mentioned his name if that right hon Gentleman had still been a member of the Government. Whatever the reason which animated the hon. Gentleman, he asserted, most emphatically, that there was not a shadow of foundation for his statement. What were the grounds for it? There was no proof of it; and the hon. Gentleman had made the statement quite unnecessarily. The hon. Member for Derby knew well that during the present Parliament the Board of Trade had been more successful in regard to the question of accidents and hours of labour than on any previous occasion. The hon. Member for Northamptonshire confined himself to the question of couplings, and blamed the Board of Trade for not having done anything to introduce automatic couplings, and in confirmation of that statement he gave the House a comparison of what had happened on American railways. But that comparison was absolutely useless in regard to British and American railways.

MR. CHANNING said he had compared the figures of accidents in 1893 with the figures in 1897 on the American railways. He had made no comparison between the number of accidents, and the number of men employed in America and in the United Kingdom.

MR. BONAR LAW said he did not see why the hon. Gentleman should have referred to the American railways unless he wished to imply that the same should have happened in America as in the United Kingdom. He held that the comparison was perfectly useless, because in America the coupling was done with a pole outside the waggons, and in this country it was done inside the waggons.

*MR. BELL said that the pole introduced a new element of danger.

MR. BONAR LAW said that he was going to give a comparison between the number of accidents resulting from coupling in this country and in the United States. It would be unfair to the American system to suppose, however, that that comparison represented truly the two systems. The figures referred to the whole of America, including the West, where a large number of unskilled men were employed. If the comparison were made with the railways in the Eastern States, it would probably show results very much similar to those in this country. Last year the number of fatal accidents due to coupling in America was 278. Now, in the schedule of the United States were included accidents which were not called coupling accidents in this country. But the number of fatalities due to shunting operations in this country in 1904 was only seventy-four. If it were taken into account that in America there were twice as many men employed in these operations as in this country, and the other considerations were allowed for, it meant that for every man killed in the United Kingdom two men were killed in the United States. He hoped that the House would not think that the Board of Trade imagined that our system was as good or better than any other. Nothing of the kind. The aim of the Board of Trade was to reduce the number of accidents from coupling to as low a minimum as possible. The hon. Member knew that no automatic system of coupling had been invented which the Board of Trade could impose on the railway companies. Their chief inspector had given it as his opinion that from the point of view of the safety of the workmen our system was safer than the American. In that case all the Board of Trade could do was to encourage invention as far as they could. And that was what they were doing. He believed that the railway companies themselves were inviting a suitable invention which would be an advantage to the workmen and a great saving of expense to them.

The next point was the question as to the number of hours which the railway men worked. The hon. Member said that the Board of Trade did not take action except in cases of complaint. It was quite true that the Act of 1893 stated that that was to be their chief motive power, but they had taken action on other grounds. In dealing with long hours, it was a fact that the railway companies did allow for the time actually spent by the men in going to and from their homes to work and paid them for that time.

*MR. BELL said that the instances he gave were of men working for twelve hours before starting for their homes.

MR. BONAR LAW said that it was the duty of the hon. Gentleman whenever he heard of such a thing to inform the Board of Trade of it; and he could assure him that the moment they did hear of it the Board of Trade would take all steps within their power to examine into the matter. The hon. Member for Derby had said that the men were very much afraid to make complaints, but he could assure the hon. Member that whenever a complaint was made the Board of Trade inspectors made inquiry over a very large area so as to hide the facts from the railway company. As to the question of long hours he would point out that it was one upon which railway men were by no means united. They wanted shorter hours only if they could get the same pay, but if the change meant a smaller amount of wages at the end of the week they did not want the shorter hours. That was the difficulty they had to deal with.

*MR. BELL did not understand what the hon. Gentleman meant by that, and called his attention to a very important conference which was held at Leeds, at which he was present, where 276 drivers and firemen emphatically declared in favour of an eight hours day and their intention to have it.

MR. BONAR LAW said he was certain that the hon. Gentleman would not contradict him when he said that there was a considerable minority who liked these long hours. He could give a very curious instance of that kind. The Board of Trade had noticed in the Returns a case of long hours worked by an engine-driver and they called for an explanation. It appeared that the engine-driver had asked another driver who wanted to go to a football match as a particular favour to let him do that job. Although the Board of Trade blamed the railway company, it therefore turned out that it was the action of the men themselves which brought about the circumstance of which complaint was made.

*MR. BELL: It should be stopped.

MR. BONAR LAW: Yes, and, as I have said, we are doing our very best to put a stop to it.

Continuing, the hon. Gentleman said that the next question he had to deal with was that which related to accidents. He could on that point only repeat what he had already said. There could be no doubt that this country compared favourably with respect to accidents with any country in the world, but still accidents were far too numerous, and it was the intention of the Board of Trade to use to the fullest extent the powers conferred upon them to try to reduce the number as far as they could, but the whole number could not be stopped by any legislation or any administrative act on their part. He had had prepared an analysis of the total number of accidents which were reported on last year by their own inspectors and with which the railways had nothing to do. The Board of Trade inspectors made 717 inquiries and they reported that in no fewer than 483 cases the accidents were directly attributable to the carelessness of the men who suffered injury or the workmen who were working beside them, and were not due in any sense to the want of proper regulation on the part of the railway companies or want of proper inspection by the Board of Trade. As to the remainder of the accidents their inspectors reported that 166 were due to accidents which could not have been prevented. They were, it was said, accidents pure and simple which nobody could have prevented, and the Committee would be surprised to learn that out of this total of 717 only sixty-eight were put down by the inspectors as being of the kind which could have been prevented by adminisrative action. But still sixty-eight was a great number, and it was the intention and the duty of the Board of Trade to do what they could to prevent such a number occurring.

The last grievance brought forward by the hon. Member was a very old one, and it had reference to inspection. The hon. Member wanted the Board of Trade to adopt in regard to the railways all over the kingdom a system exactly similar to that which was pursued under the Factory and Workshop Acts. He could only tell the hon. Member what had been said over and over again by those who had held his office, that the

Board of Trade had carefully considered the subject and would not as at present advised agree to that change. They thought it unnecessary, and that it would lead to a great deal of expense without any adequate return. It would create an army of inspectors who could do no useful work. On this point he wished to correct a misapprehension which he had noticed to exist in previous debates. Hon. Members seemed to think that their inspectors never took action unless they got complaints, but that was not the case. They were at all times going about the railways all over the country, and whenever they had ground for suspicion that the conditions were not satisfactory and that the Board of Trade rules were not being carried out, they informed the Department and a demand was made upon the railway companies to carry out the regulations. In their opinion that was all that it was necessary for them to do. He was surprised to find the hon. Member for Derby making a comparison which he must know was misleading. The hon. Member compared the number of accidents in factories and workshops with the number of accidents upon railways where there were moving trains. Everyone knew that the men who were in factories and workshops worked with stationary engines, or about the yards where there were no moving engines, and that it was the movement of the engines which caused the greater number of accidents upon railways. The hon. Member said that if they had the same inspection of moving trains as they had in factories and workshops, the result as to accidents would be the same in both cases. The comparison was, however, unfair.

*MR. BELL was sure the hon. Gentleman did not want to misrepresent what he said. His point was this, that notwithstanding the low number of accidents in workshops and factories they were inspected, and that notwithstanding the large number of accidents on railways they were not.

MR. BONAR LAW said in that case he did not rightly understand the hon. Gentleman, but his speech gave one the impression that his contention was that the accidents would be reduced to the same percentage if the same system was adopted on railways, prevailed in factories and workshops. It would mean an enormous expense to have inspectors going all over the kingdom and watching continuously the working of the railways and the workers engaged on them. The hon. Member seemed to be under the impression that the Government had allowed the rules which had been drawn up to become a dead letter. He was utterly mistaken. A large number of inspectors had been sent to examine into the questions raised, and they had made recommendations which in nearly every case the railway company had adopted. He thought when the Return which was expected was produced the hon. Member would recognise that there was a distinct improvement in the hours of railway servants. He would do his best to get the Return out as soon as possible.

*MR. BELL said he wished the hon. Gentleman to reply to the Question as to the rules issued and the application of the railways for an extension of time.

MR. BONAR LAW said that steps were being taken for the carrying out of the rules, but it would probably take a little time before they could fully satisfy themselves that they were being carried out. He believed, however, that the railway companies recognised that they had got to be carried out and would assist the Board in seeing them brought into effect.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.) expressed disappointment at the declaration which the hon. Gentleman had made with regard to automatic couplings. The hon. Member had stated that the inspectors had not been able to find an automatic coupling suitable to the railways of this country. There were, however, 550 patents registered in the Patent Office of this country for automatic couplings, and he believed there were 1,000 similar specifications registered in the American Patent Office, and he did not believe that the inspectors had examined all these. He thought it had been proved that the reduced number of accidents in the United States largely arose from the use of automatic couplings. Some years ago 60 or 70 per cent. of the carriages on American railways were fitted with these brakes, and he believed if the system were introduced in this country the saving of life would be equally great. The Canadian lines were also adopting the same system. He hoped the hon. Gentleman would give them an assurance that he did not propose that the same cold-water treatment should be applied to this question for ever. Many of them were interested in this question, not from any personal view, but because they were anxious to see a diminution in the loss of life on railways. Anybody who lived in a district where there were many railway employees was bound to see scenes which would make him do anything in his power to reduce the suffering which he witnessed. The deaths were so sudden. A man left his home full of health and life in the morning, and he was brought back dead by his friends in the evening, and his wife and family lost his support. Statements made by the manager of the Grand Trunk line of Canada and others, clearly proved that automatic couplings attached to the trains in this country would not only tend to very largely diminish the number of accidents, but also to facilitate the carriage of goods from one part to another. He trusted the hon. Gentleman would not allow the impression he had given that he was going to relax his exertions, to remain in the House, but that, on the contrary, he intended to bring the power he possessed to bear upon the railway companies.

Mr. BONAR LAW said the hon. Gentleman had misunderstood him. All he said was that in the opinion of the chief inspector, from the point of view of saving life, none of the systems spoken of were better than the system now in use in this country.

Mr. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe) said he did not know what evidence there was for such an opinion as that expressed by the chief inspector. In America he had had an opportunity of seeing these automatic couplings at work, and they seemed very satisfactory. He thought they should have something more than the opinion; they should have the reasons which led this gentleman to arrive at that opinion.

Sir CHARLES RENSHAW (Renfrew, W.) said the question of automatic couplings was not a novel one, and he was not surprised at what the Secretary to the Board of Trade had said. It was suggested that the Board of Trade should insist upon automatic couplings being fixed on all railways. All that they wanted was to see a reduction in the number of fatal and non-fatal accidents, but he hoped the House would bear in mind, when it was suggested that the introduction of automatic couplings into this country would enormously reduce the number of accidents, that in the first place there was a very great doubt as to whether the railway system of this country was much suited for it, and that, secondly, wherever automatic couplings existed certain accidents were caused in consequence of the use of them, one result of which had been that automatic uncoupling took place. It was that which gave rise to the state of things which existed in America. So far as the hours of labour were concerned, many of them who were directors of railway companies hoped that the Board of Trade would not forget that it was impossible to establish an absolutely uniform system of working hours for those engaged on the railway systems of this country. In the first place they had to study the convenience of those employed, who were sometimes working at a distance from the place to which they had to return. In the previous year when the hon. Member for Derby was speaking upon this matter the figures given by him were so striking that he (Sir Charles Renshaw) caused inquiries to be made with regard to the company in which he was interested. He then found that in many cases the men desired not to be booked off far away from home, but that they should be allowed to continue their work in the direction in which their home lay. He hoped when the hon. Gentleman shortened the hours he would do it in such a way as not to endanger the best interests of the men.

Mr. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) expressed the opinion that the majority of accidents did not arise out of coupling or uncoupling the waggons, but were caused by the bad system in vogue at many of the companies' sidings, where large numbers of waggons were dealt with at night time. There were many cases of this kind where the men had no lights at all except the flares lit by the men themselves. It must be perfectly obvious that unless men had a good light to do their work by there were bound to be accidents. Another fruitful cause of accident, in his opinion, was the fact that the rods and levers for moving the points were not placed below the level of the line, and that when the men were running along the line beside a train of moving waggons for the purposes of uncoupling them they tripped over the rods and in that way many accidents were caused. He believed the coupling at present in use was just as efficient as the American coupling, for the reason that no train in America could be made up without the man going between the waggons. He had to go between every waggon to couple up, whereas in England, if the coupling pole were used, no man need go between the waggons at all. The fault was that many companies did not at these sidings make the use of the pole compulsory. He believed it was not so much automatic couplings to which they should look for safety in this matter. The statement of the Board of Trade, made on the authority of one gentleman, could not be accepted. The question must be gone into fully, and if it was shown that automatic couplings were safer it would be the duty of Parliament to enforce their use.

Another cause of loss of life was the omission to have brakes on both sides of waggons. He believed more lives were lost through men having to crawl under waggons to release brakes than through the coupling or uncoupling of waggons. Six or eight years ago the Great Central Company put brakes on both sides of some of their waggons, but when he submitted specifications to other companies for the purpose of putting brakes on both sides of his own waggons the reply he received was that they did not allow them. There was one other point the Board of Trade should not lose sight of. During the last eighteen months there had been a far-reaching change in the large type of waggon in this country. If those large waggons were to be generally introduced it would be impossible to continue the use of the ordinary link-coupling. With these large waggons the couplings were so heavy that a man could not lift them, and it would be absolutely necessary to have some form of automatic coupling. He was not prepared to say how it should be done, but he could assure the Board of Trade that the matter of shunting and the attendant loss of life was no Party question, and that both sides were anxious that it should be dealt with. If he might add one word, he would urge the Board of Trade to put pressure on the companies with regard to the question of flagging. When a platelayer was killed through lack of proper flagging it was nothing short of criminal on the part of the railway company, and he hoped the Department would give the matter their attention.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil) said there were two matters mentioned in the speech of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade in regard to which a little practical sympathy would be very acceptable, viz., the appointment of inspectors and automatic couplings. It was true that a railway was not a workshop or a factory, but neither was a mine, but the inspection of railways was quite as feasible as the inspection of mines and would, he believed, be productive of as much good. He hoped, therefore, the Parliamentary Secretary would keep an open mind on the subject, as the experiment was certainly worth trying with a view to seeing whether the painful toll of life paid by railway men could not be materially lessened. As to automatic couplings, he did not quite gather what was the point of the objection. It was said there was at present no automatic coupling the adoption of which the Board of Trade could make compulsory. Why not? Were the Board waiting for a perfect coupling? If so, they were not likely to find it. But there were many automatic couplings now on the market which were admittedly workable, and the adoption of which would probably lessen the number of accidents. It was only by the working of any invention that its defects could be discovered and remedied, and while it might be the case that there was no particular coupling which the Department could make compulsory, the time had surely come, when, after the experience of America, the use of some kind of automatic coupling should be enforced.

The hon. Member for West Renfrewshire had referred to the difficulty of laying down a hard-and-fast system of hours under which the men would be able to return home in the evening. The fact that a man was required to be on duty for twelve hours on one day was no argument why his working week should not be brought within reasonable limits. If a man worked twelve hours one day and six the next that would, to a large extent, probably meet the grievance.

Another matter he desired to refer to was the appointment of the Committee dealing with workmen's trains. The nominations for that Committee were before the House, but he had opposed the Motion's going through, not because he objected to the Committee, but because he desired that there should be a representative of the Labour interest upon it. It was a workmen's question, and surely in such a matter the Committee should include a workmen's representative. He hoped the Board of Trade were really desirous that something should be done in this matter, but certainly their action in regard to this Committee was not very encouraging. Last session the Committee was not appointed until after Whitsuntide, and only eleven meetings were held, and this year, although the Motion was down earlier, the Department refused to grant this perfectly reasonable claim—a claim all the more reasonable since one member who served last year was quite prepared to withdraw in order to make room for a Labour nominee. While he had no desire to delay the appointment of the Committee, he would refuse to withdraw his opposition unless the concession for which he asked was made.

Mr. Keir Hardie.

In 1893 or 1894 the late Mr. Mundella introduced a Bill in connection with the hours of labour of railway men, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University moved an Amendment specifying that anything over eight hours a day in certain departments of work and ten in others should be reckoned as over-time. It was extremely desirable that the Board of Trade should now reintroduce some proviso of that kind. He could assure the hon. Gentleman that if his Department would face the hours difficulty in some such practical way as that the proposal would be received in no factious spirit by the Labour Members, but with a desire to secure its passage into law without delay.

MR. BENN (Devonport) drew attention to what he thought might be described as a crisis in London education. There had to-day been presented to the London County Council in reference to the condition of the non-provided schools an important report, the volume of which might be judged from the fact that the agenda for to-day's meeting consisted of 384 pages. The action of the London County Council in loyally assisting the Government to carry out their education scheme in London had been criticised and objected to by many members of the Opposition, but he reminded the hon. Baronet of the fact, as a plea for special consideration, of the circumstances which had transpired since the duty was undertaken. The County Council were recommended to postpone the "appointed day," and to follow the example of another part of the Kingdom in putting every impediment in the way of the operation of an Act which they regarded as objectionable. They took the line that it was their duty in view of the need of education in London with regard to the children to sacrifice their principles for the moment in order that the children of London should not suffer. Consequently they promptly put the Act into operation and they had done all that could be done to give effect to that measure. What was the position in which they found themselves to-day? First of all they noticed with some astonishment that the organs generally identified with the Government and its policy were raising the cry of the rising rates and declaring that the London County Council was ruining London in consequence of increased rates. The actual figures showed that the increase in the rates of the London County Council was modest as compared with the increase in the rates of those borough councils in the Metropolis which were the creation of the Government. He did not, however, propose to deal with that question, because they knew this increase was owing to all sorts of duties and responsibilities which had been placed upon them by the Government while it had done nothing to relieve the burden of the London ratepayers. Some time ago Lord Goschen drew attention to this constantly increasing responsibility, and he told the House that something must be done to assist London to meet these increasing burdens. The House would probably remember the Van and Wheel Tax, but that was defeated, and the only thing the Government had done was to place fresh duties upon the London County Council without finding ways and means to pay for them.

He wished to call attention to the seriousness of this report in regard to the non-provided schools. This report had staggered London, and the electors of the Metropolis had no idea that the non-provided schools were in the distressed condition which this report revealed. In the survey which he would give to the House the London County Council had secured the services of those officers who in the past had been associated with the London School Board, and they had employed an architect of great experience. That architect, having surveyed the 438 non-provided schools, was only able to report satisfactorily with regard to sixty-four of those schools. Twenty-five per cent. of those schools, he considered, were altogether unsuitable, and he said it had been found impossible to make suggestions for improving them so as to meet the Council's requirements. They were also told that ninety-two of those schools must be closed at once, and twenty-six departments of other schools were unsuitable and should not be allowed to continue in use. The total number of departments which, in the opinion of their officers, were unsuitable for the purposes of elementary education, was 229. He did not propose to trouble the House with the details of this report, but perhaps he would be allowed to take one item which he was quite sure would appeal to the sympathy of the House of Commons. He referred to the drains of the schools. They had been talking a great deal about the physical deterioration of the children, and some hon. Members were deeply concerned that something should be done to assist the children of this country on the physical side. All this work would count for very little if the drains of the schools were unsatisfactory. This report told them that 78 per cent. of the school drains had been tested quite outside the County Council officers, and had been declared to be unsatisfactory. No wonder they had physical deterioration of the children. What did this mean? This Education Act was dumped down at the doorstep of the London County Council, because they never asked for those duties, but they carried them out and had done the best they could with the measure. This report showed clearly that if those children were to be protected with regard to their bodies and minds, they would have to find 70,000 new school places for the children of London. That was a formidable total, and it meant an additional expenditure of £224,000 a year. But that was not the whole of the story.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: These are matters which come under the administration of the London County Council, and to be in order the hon. Member must connect them with the Civil Service Estimates which are now before the House.

MR. BENN said if he had transgressed he was sure he would have the indulgence of the House. The line he was taking was that they were entitled to discuss anything under the Estimates for the Education Department with regard to the administration of that Department, and he submitted that in placing this matter before the Secretary to the Board of Education he might perhaps be in order. He wished to explain that he was speaking as a representative of the London County Council, and he was asking the advice and the assistance of the Secretary to the Board of Education. He wanted to know what they were to do. They were carrying out the Act under his care and supervision, and this was a most urgent matter. This state of things had arisen owing to the negligence of the Department which was so ably represented by the hon. Gentleman opposite. What had the Education Department been doing all these years? It seemed to him that being in possession of all the information in regard to the condition of these schools in London he ought to certainly have known that this measure would throw a heavy burden upon the already overburdened ratepayers of London. The London County Council had innocently taken this work up, and now they found themselves face to face with a crisis of very great magnitude.

He proposed to conclude by drawing attention to the summary of this most important report. It said—

> "Further, it appears that the total cost to the Council of the transfer to it of the duty of providing for the elementary education of children now accommodated in non-provided schools will amount to £523,000 a year."

That was £500,000 a year on the backs of the ratepayers of London. He claimed that the London County Council took up this work with every desire to administer the Act in a law-abiding spirit, and he thought it was the duty of the Government to come to the help of London in this matter. This cry of rising rates had been taken up by those who were friendly to the Progressive policy of the London County Council. He should like to have seen some of the hon. Members who professed to represent London in their places. Outside they cried out about the rise in the rates, but they did not seem to care about being in their places to protect the ratepayers. He regarded this as one of the most important matters which had occurred in the history of London, and unless the Government came to the assistance of the ratepayers of London it would be making but a poor return to the representatives of the London County Council who had done their best to carry out the wishes of the Government in regard to education.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said he hoped they were strictly in order in very briefly calling the attention of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education to this very grave crisis. Their point was that this was a branch of work in regard to education for which the London County Council was not responsible. They desired to bring a charge against the Education Department and they wished to know what that Department had got to say in view of the very serious state of matters which had now been brought to light. He thought this report, containing 384 pages, was without parallel in municipal history, and it showed a most grave and serious state of things, and he thought they were entitled to ask what the Government were going to do. If the Government did not do something the whole burden would be flung on London without the ratepayers getting any assistance whatever in respect of the schools over which the ratepayers had no control. In every one of those schools the ratepayers had only two representatives out of six managers, and they were in a minority, and consequently they were without any right of control and could not guard against a recurrence of these evils. And yet the people of London had to find the money. The Secretary to the Board of Education was not entirely ignorant of the evils of which they had to complain. He felt sure that the fullest information about what had been going on had been brought to the notice of the Board of Education by its inspectors. He thought they ought to have a full statement with regard to the position of the Government in this matter. The ratepayers of London were threatened with an extra 4d. in the £, because they had been deceived in regard to the position of the schools which the Government insisted in throwing on their backs without giving control over them. Would the Board of Education not have something to say about the grave matter which had been brought to light? He thought his hon. friend was well entitled to ask the Question he had put to the Board of Education, and he hoped some Answer would be given which would show that the emergency was not so grave as it appeared to be at the present moment. They sometimes heard criticism with regard to expenditure on the part of municipalities, the raising of rates, and the difficulty of borrowing money. It was no use for the Government and their supporters to harp on questions like these when they themselves were imposing new duties and placing fresh burdens on the backs of the ratepayers. He hoped some information would be given with regard to this matter of the schools on behalf of the Government.

*The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the BOARD of EDUCATION (Sir William Anson, Oxford University) said he understood Mr. Deputy-Speaker had ruled that this was more or less a matter of London County Council administration, and he would endeavour, therefore, to confine what he had to say to the subject properly under discussion.

Mr. LOUGH, on a point of order, wished to know whether it was not competent to ask for full information, seeing that the non-provided schools, to which the discussion had been entirely confined, were under the Board of Education, and only to a slight extent under the ratepayers.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) submitted, as a point of order, that the ultimate power rested with the Board of Education; they were not discussing the action of the local education authorities, but the action of the Board of Education in reference to them.

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: It is perfectly clear that the action of the education authorities, their reports and so forth, cannot be considered; the only thing the House has now to consider is the action of the Government Department. The hon. Member proposes to confine his remarks to the action of the Government Department, and therefore he is in order.

*Sir WILLIAM ANSON thought he might appeal to the House on the grounds that he had had no notice until a few minutes ago that this question was to be raised, and that this report was only now in the hands of the London County Council, and had not been in his hands. He had only seen what had appeared in the Press. When, therefore, the hon. Member asked that the advice of the Board on this matter should be given immediately, he thought the request was more than he could reasonably be expected to comply with. He fully recognised the public spirit with which the London County Council had taken up the administration of education under the Education Act; but he could not possibly be expected to offer an opinion on matters of the gravest municipal concern on the spur of the moment, and without having had before him the report in question. He understood that the report of the education committee of the London County Council had been very largely condemnatory of the voluntary schools. That, no doubt, did raise serious questions for the London County Council as a matter of administration and as a matter of municipal expenditure. It was alleged that this would not have arisen if the Board of Education had in the past been more stringent in its requirements as regarded the condition of these schools, and that might be so. He could only speak within his own knowledge, and for his own action in the matter. But he must point out to the hon. Member that places would have to be provided at some time or other for these children, and that if the schools had been condemned in the past the ratepayer would have had to provide for them in the past. He did not for a moment say that there might not be some argument in favour of their having been condemned in the past; but that it was the duty, whether of the London School Board or of the London County Council, to find places for the children for whom no other school accommodation was provided was, he thought, incontestable, and would have fallen on the London ratepayers whether the Education Act had or had not been passed

It was hinted that the Board of Education had unduly interfered between the local authority and the managers in respect of the demands made by local education authorities for repairs, alterations, and improvements of the schools. That was a question with which he should be prepared to deal if he were given fair notice of the nature of the charge made against the Board, and of the particular schools in whose case the Board was believed to have departed from its duty; but it was not fair to ask him to meet a general charge of that sort with no notice and without the information which he ought reasonably to be given. The hon. Member for Islington had said that an enormous charge was thrown on the London County Council without any possibility of guarding against its recurrence. He thought, in the first place, that the London County Council would probably inquire very carefully into the particular conditions of the schools. He had no desire to criticise the report, which he had not had an opportunity of seeing; but he had seen it stated, not by persons specially interested in the voluntary schools, that the drainage tests applied were unduly exacting, and that the failure of a drain to meet the requirements of the particular test applied did not absolutely prove that the building was insanitary. That, however, he merely threw out as a suggestion as to the possible lightening of the burden which might—which must fall on the London County Council, who would go fully and carefully into the condition of these schools and ascertain how much was to be done immediately and what might properly be postponed. As to the impossibility of guarding against the recurrence of these evils, he should say that that was a chimerical danger. These buildings, when they were required to be put by the London County Council into good condition—those of them which survived the ordeal of the report, would have to be maintained in good condition if they were to obtain the advantages which the Act afforded to all schools which complied with the reasonable demands of the local education authority. It rested, therefore, with the London County Council, having got them into an improved condition, to see that they were kept in good condition, and if they were not so kept to insist that they should be. The question of reasonableness might from time to time be a matter of dispute between the managers and the local education authority, and the somewhat invidious duty might be thrown on the Board of Education of determining whether the requirements were reasonable or not. All he could say was that when the matter came before him he would endeavour to come to a conclusion as judicially as his imperfect capacities enabled him, and he hoped that in such cases as might come before him in the future he should preserve to the utmost that judicial character. But if he were asked, in what had been called a crisis in the history of London's education, to give advice, he must again remind hon. Members that the County Council had not as yet had time to consider a report which primarily concerned them. Beyond this he could only assure the House that so far as the Board could do so it would secure that schools, whether provided or non-provided, were kept in a proper condition throughout the whole area of London.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said he was not aware that this discussion was coming on, and he had no opportunity, therefore, of giving notice to the Secretary of the Board of Education that he desired to call attention to this matter. But as it had been raised he thought it was their duty to press it a little further. This was not merely a London matter, but one for the whole country, and the Secretary to the Board of Education was primarily responsible. If the Board of Education had taken the trouble to ascertain, they would have found that a similar state of things to that in London had been going on throughout the country. The responsibility for that condition was largely on the Board of Education. From a statement which had been sent out it would be observed that the drains in the non-provided schools were generally in a very bad condition. It went on to describe the condition of the schools, stating that there were no staircases, and that if there was a panic there would be serious disaster in the event of fire. The statement dealt with matters of that sort. Whose was the responsibility? Up to the present, at any rate, the responsibility had been on the Board of Education. It was all very well for the hon. Member to remind the House that the result would be an enormous addition to the rates, and that, therefore, he could not press these reforms all at once, but he forgot that if the Board of Education had done their duty these things would have been done gradually instead of coming all at once. Now the sum of £300,000 or £400,000 came on the rates. If the Board of Education had done their duty they would have investigated the condition of the drains in these schools, and also other sanitary matters, such as light and ventilation, and there would not have been this enormous addition to the burdens of London ratepayers cast upon them all at once. It was because of their neglect that this had happened. The Board had looked at one side of the problem. He remembered the debates in the House in regard to sites for the building of new schools, and the Board of Education always interfered in order to stop them. Their policy was pure dogma at the expense of putrid drains. This was the Board that was trying to enforce the law in Wales.

What was the law of the land? It was specific and clear that they had no right to maintain any of these schools unless they were in the sanitary condition required by the Board of Education. How was it that these laws had not been in force? It was simply because of their Church friends. They were implicated in it, and they brought pressure to bear on the Board. The law was only made for Dissenters. It was not intended for High Church parsons. It was for rabid little Dissenters. These were the people who had to be trampled upon. He knew it was very hard to make them responsible; but here the hon. Baronet was making the County Council responsible. The notion of law on the part of the Education Board was extraordinary. He and his friends went the other day before the Marquess of Londonderry and pleaded that, with the exception of one or two schools, all of those condemned were insanitary, were insufficiently lighted, or otherwise defective. The President of the Board of Education said, "You must maintain them whether they are sanitary or not." The legal argument was put before the Marquess of Londonderry, who knew just as much about law as he did about education; and what did his Lordship do? The moment the deputation said to him: "You have got to enforce that part of the law which says that the county councils need not take over those schools until they are put into a proper state of repair," his Lordship banged his box and walked out of the room. What an insult to compel Church managers to obey the law! It was for the county councils to obey the law!

Let him remind the hon. Baronet of his own Act. The hon. Gentleman seemed to have forgotten that Section 7 said that the local education authority should maintain and keep in repair all public elementary schools. The Board of Education said they were going to enforce that provision; but Section 7 did not end there. There were other twenty or thirty lines, and amongst those lines there were ten or a dozen which stated that the managers must hand them over in a good state of repair. They must not stop at the second line of the section if they were going to administer the law impartially. After all the Government would never have carried this section through the House if that had not been made a condition. He recollected perfectly well the discussions on the section, and it was with the greatest difficulty that the Government carried it even with that condition. Hon. Members on their own side of the House who had a real and genuine interest in education were not prepared to support the clause except on the condition that the voluntary schools were to be put in a state of good repair, and kept so. But the Board of Education had forgotten that part of the bargain. All he and his friends asked for was that the law should be impartially administered in the future; in fact, that they should take a new departure both in regard to London and country schools. The Board of Education had never held an even balance between those schools which were popular schools, and the schools which were sectarian. All he asked was the general proposition that the Board of Education should, not merely in London, but all through the country, insist that these voluntary schools should be put and kept in order. It was a very serious thing to send young children to schools of this kind. Day by day they were there five and six hours, breathing foul air which destroyed their little constitutions. Much better would it be that they should be outside altogether, learning nothing, than breathing bad air. It was all very well to appoint Committees to examine into the physical deterioration of the race, but at this moment the Government was not carrying out the law which enabled the Education Department to keep the children's constitutions right and proper. Let the children have pure air to begin with. He thought that it was monstrous that all this should be done in the name of religion—all those bad drains, all those badly lighted schools, all those staircases that might prove death-traps to little children, and all those conditions that would ruin their little lives. What good did they do by saying that they were keeping religion going in the land? It was all a monstrous hypocrisy and a sham.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.) said he had heard the reply of the hon. Gentleman the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education with a good deal of disquietude. He need not labour the unanimity of this report, but in order to break the fall of it on the ratepayers of London, the hon. Baronet said he viewed with equanimity the presence of children in schools in which the drains were defective.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON said he never asserted anything of the sort. He did say that the London County Council had reported very carefully, but he never had said a word that would bear the construction that he viewed with equanimity the insanitary condition of the schools.

DR. MACNAMARA said that the statement of the hon. Baronet was that the standard test for drainage of schools to which it was proper children should go was not a proper one.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON said that he had heard that certain drainage tests applied by the London County Council were not always to be relied upon. He did not speak of his own knowledge, but said that the London County Council might find, on further inquiry, that the condition of the drains was not as bad as they believed.

DR. MACNAMARA said that the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education alleged that the drainage test of the London County Council was too severe, and that if the London County Council looked into the matter they might find that the drains were not so very bad. Well, knowing something of the methods of the Board of Education, he hoped the Board would not look too tenderly at these voluntary schools and would not procrastinate in seeing that the children whom they compelled by law to go to school did not go to schools which were in an insanitary condition. There were in London 458 voluntary schools, ninety-four of them were condemned right out, and 314 of them were condemned in the matter of drainage, bad light, and ventilation. Would the Board of Education give the order to the denominational trustees to replace these schools which were condemned outright, and make good the deficiencies in the others? If they did so, money would have to be found to provide 60,000 new school places; and half a million of money to maintain them. He had warrant for saying that the Board of Education would not. He had been at them a dozen times on the matter. There was nothing new in all this. It had been all in the pigeon-holes of the Board of Education for the last dozen years. When he had gone to the Board of Education and made representations in regard to the matter what was the reply? "Certainly we shall do nothing; we shall obstruct any Provisional Order and get the Government to reject it, because if you do attempt to carry out your views, you will do injury to the voluntary schools." His hon. friend the Member for Devonport said that there would be no hurry about this matter; that a very long time would elapse before the instructions of the Act of Parliament would be put in force. That was his experience of the Board of Education for the past ten years. Let him say in this connection that the Church of England had been guilty of a breach of good faith. During the passage of the Act of 1902–3 the Bishop of London appealed for £30,000 to put the voluntary schools in London into a structurally fit condition before handing them over to the London County Council. The words of the letter were—

"We desire that these schools should be handed over in a condition consistent with the principles for which they stand."

He did not know whether the report to which reference had been made was to stand as representative of the principles for which the right rev. Bishop said they stood. The voluntary schools were handed over to the London County Council without anything being done to them to put them in good and efficient repair, and that was a breach of good faith with the public of London. He could not hope, but he ventured to express the faint desire, that the lenity and procrastination of the Board of Education would not go on. The Act of 1903 set up an entirely new state of affairs. He was rather glad of the Act, because he believed it gave to the London County Council an opportunity for overhauling these voluntary schools. And he hoped that the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education would endeavour, in the new circumstances set up by the Acts of 1902 and 1903, to break away from the old policy of the Board, and not permit unnecessary delay in putting these schools into a proper condition, or in shutting them up altogether and seeing new schools erected. If the Church of England could not raise £500,000, which he knew it could not, for that purpose, it meant that the school rate for London would be raised 4d. in the £1, while the ratepayers would have a very small measure of control over the voluntary schools—only two managers out of six. All these facts pointed to the necessity of some drastic amendment of the Acts of 1902–3 in the direction of giving the people who found the money control over the schools commensurate with the public expenditure upon them. In this terrible report—and he called it terrible advisedly—there was only one gleam of satisfaction. It was that notwithstanding the hapless condition of the fabric of the schools in regard to lighting, drainage, water, ventilation, etc.—the committee were compelled to pay a tribute to the zeal and devotion of the voluntary school teachers. That was no new tribute. These teachers had had to work very hard on a very small remuneration, but they had been able to do service in the cause of education which was a marvel to those who knew the condition of those schools.

Mr. GODDARD (Ipswich) was glad that this subject had been brought forward, because the discussion had shown the difficulties with which the local education authorities were struggling in consequence of the action of the Board of Education. This was not a matter for London alone; it affected the whole country and he did not think the Secretary to the Board of Education would be able altogether to wriggle out of his responsibility for what had passed, because it was now coming to light every day. These reports in regard to the denominational schools were now coming into the Education Department every day and they were all revealing this one thing, viz., that the policy of the Board of Education had been consistently to have one law for the denominational schools and another law for the old Board schools. The class of buildings was entirely different in the two cases, and buildings had been allowed to pass as fit for denominational schools which would have been condemned out and out if they had been carried on by a school board. This was exceedingly apparent now, when they came to deal with this question of putting all these buildings in a fit and proper condition, which in the present state of things was now considered necessary for them.

He understood that the Secretary to the Board of Education said that he must not be pressed about the report on the London schools as it was too early for him to give an opinion upon it, and the report was not before him, but he wished to ask why the Board of Education did not put a little more energy into dealing with the applications which came from other parts of the United Kingdom in regard to the requirements of these schools? He spoke from personal knowledge, and certainly more than a year had elapsed since the first report went in on one of these school buildings. It was a disgraceful building, absolutely unfitted for a school—a building about which Government inspectors for years had been finding fault, but about which the Board of Education had done nothing to insist upon improvements being made. The school was examined by the surveyor of the local education authority and a report was sent up as to the requirements of that authority and as to what they considered should be done to put the building in a proper state of repair. That matter had been hung up for a year. There had been correspondence and so forth, and yet no advance whatever had been made and, so far as he could see, the authorities were no nearer to having the building put into proper order after the lapse of a year than they were a year ago. The foundation managers said the requirements were not reasonable, and that the local education authority should appeal to the Board of Education to say whether it was reasonable or not. It was not, therefore, the local education authority who were putting hindrances in the way. Why did not the Education Department answer?

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON: Will the hon. Gentleman kindly supply me with the name of the school and I will see that the matter is inquired into?

MR. GODDARD did not think the hon. Baronet would need him to supply the name, because the facts had been before him for a long time. But he would mention the case to him. In five or six cases that he knew of certain requirements had been insisted upon by the local education authority. They had been hung up and nothing had been done. It would take years before any improvement was made in the school buildings. He would urge upon the Board of Education to put a little more energy into the matter and see that the alterations were put in hand at once. The Board should not let the correspondence be interminable and prolonged between the managers and themselves.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS (Glamorganshire, Mid.) said the report was of a very serious nature and illustrated the conduct of the Board of Education and the Government which had been in office for very many years. The complaint made in the time of Mr. Acland was that he brought undue pressure to bear upon the owners and the proprietors of the voluntary schools, not in the interest of the schools but in order that he might shut them up. He believed that accusation was quite unfair and that considerable pressure was brought to bear by Mr. Acland merely to put these schools in a fit and proper condition. He believed that his sole object was that the children should be properly dealt with, and not that protection should be extended as it had been since to the proprietors of these schools. The report showed that the schools were structurally unsuited for their purpose and that it was necessary to close many of them at once. What ought to be the policy of the Education Department, not only in London, but all over the country? Surely it ought to be directed with one idea of doing what was best for the rising generation without reference to whether they belonged to the Established Church or were Roman Catholics or belonged to any other denomination. The Department should bring pressure to bear upon the authorities of the schools, but was that pressure being brought to bear? Section 7 of the Act of 1902 said that the education authority need not take over these schools except upon conditions, one of which was that the schools must be in good repair. If the education authorities in London did their duty they would see that that condition was enforced. He wished to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether the Department were proceeding on this kind of basis, viz., that they should relieve the pressure upon the ground that they were not able to withhold the monies which were voted by Parliament from these voluntary schools because for some reason or another they were estopped from doing so. If that were the case, such a doctrine of waiver or estoppel prevented the Department from using the powers which had been placed in its hands by Parliament, to withhold these monies from the schools until they were put into repair.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.) pointed out that many of the voluntary schools were built many years ago, and although there was no objection to the trustees being made to make small repairs, he contended that the report went too far. It was extremely hard upon the trustees of those schools, if it was not unfair, that they should now be called upon to spend considerable sums of money to bring them up to date. There was first of all the test for drainage. How many houses which were now in existence would stand that test? He did not think many of the houses in which hon. Members lived would stand it, nor did he think the House of Commons would stand such a test. He therefore hoped the most careful investigation would be made in every case before the order of the County Council was allowed to be enforced. The report had been adopted and its adoption had placed an enormous work on the poor Catholics in London, and he thought that would establish a very strong case for a special grant from this House to the Catholic voluntary schools. He sincerely hoped that the Department would act very cautiously and make very careful inquiries before proceeding upon this report. Let them look, for instance, at the complaint with regard to the amount of playground accommodation. They were told that certain schools would be condemned if they had not sufficient playground accommodation, which meant that in the case of many of the schools in London the trustees would have to acquire the residential or business premises adjoining and pull them down in order to make more playground accommodation, the penalty for not doing so being the closing of the school and the erection of a new one at the public cost. He hoped the hon. Gentleman would see that no injustice was done in this respect.

Mr. J. H. LEWIS (Flint Boroughs) said complaint had been made as to the delay on the part of the Board of Education in putting into force the obligations resting on managers of voluntary schools to put their schools into a proper state of repair. There were two methods of resistance by the Board, one was active and the other passive resistance, and he regarded the Secretary to the Board of Education as the greatest passive resister in the country. It was only necessary for the Board to say "We will inquire into this matter," in order to enable them to keep the authority waiting so long as the authority chose to let them alone. Then when the authority wrote to them they sent a formal acknowledgment and again hung the matter up. He apprehended that if a ratepayer in answer to an application for his rate answered that he was in correspondence with his banker upon that subject the rate collector would have a very short and sharp reply to it, but the Board of Education could allow schools to be ill-drained, ill-ventilated, ill-lighted, and ill-heated, and provided the persons interested in that school were sufficiently influential with the Board that sort of thing could go on for years. Were not the schools at large to be put into a proper sanitary condition. He asked the hon. Gentleman in this matter to search his own conscience and say whether, in fact, in the spirit, if not in the letter, he had not been one of the greatest law-breakers in the country. There was not a district from which these complaints did not come, and instances could be multiplied by the thousand where this question had been approached in a partisan and sectarian spirit by those who pretended to be the judges. What they complained of was the great influence behind the hon. Gentleman, the influence of that Great Palace on the South side of the Thames, the result of which was to prevent the children of this country from being housed as they ought to be housed. The school was the home of the children during a considerable portion of their working hours, and it ought to be kept in a decent state of repair. So far as the Welsh county councils were concerned they had not taken any drastic or severe action; they had given the schools at least twelve months notice, and they had no desire to be harsh in any way. But the hon. Baronet was going to enforce some portions of the Act very rigidly. He ought really to ask himself whether he was doing his duty by the country generally, and by the children of the country, in allowing the delay to continue against which the Welsh representatives had again and again protested, and they now asked whether if a fair statement of the case as to the necessities of these schools were laid before him he would act upon the report forthwith, or was there to be merely an acknowledgment and a promise to consider the matter?

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said he had listened with great regret to the speech of the hon. Baronet with regard to the London education question. Though he opposed the Education Act with regard to its main provisions, he believed that good was coming out of evil, in that exposures were now being made as to the inefficient state of the voluntary schools which never would have been made but for that Act. The report of the London County Council, which had come with a considerable shock to all interested in education, whether they were friends of voluntary schools or not, was really an exposure, first, of the way in which a large number of managers of voluntary schools had neglected the health and education of the children, and secondly of the neglect and inefficiency of the Education Department itself. Personally he was inclined to blame the Education Department more severely than the voluntary managers, and for this reason. It had always been contended that the country did not get full value for the enormous expenditure on education, and it was the duty of the Board of Education, as far as possible, to see that full value was obtained for the money spent, but this report showed that for years past the Education Department had practically neglected its duties and had been in the hands of those who represented the voluntary schools. The hon. Baronet appeared to minimise this report of the London County Council.

*Sir WILLIAM ANSON dissented.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON said that so far as he understood him the hon. Baronet said that he had not had an opportunity of considering the report, but that when he did consider it he might find that in some cases the condition of the schools had been somewhat exaggerated.

*Sir WILLIAM ANSON: I did not say anything of the sort. I expressed a hope that the County Council, when they considered the report, which I have not yet seen, might find that in some cases the condition of the schools was not so hopeless as their first impressions led them to believe.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON said they all hoped that the schools were not so bad as they had been painted, but even assuming that those who carried out the inquiry had exaggerated the condition of some schools, there was ample evidence to show that in a vast number of cases the schools were not only absolutely inefficient educationally, but harmful to the health and physical growth of the children. The fact that over ninety schools, accommodating 50,000 children, had been absolutely condemned was in itself enough to condemn the managers of the schools, and he would not say the hon. Baronet, but his predecessors at the Education Department. Over and over again the late London School Board, when it desired to substitute efficient schools for the inefficient voluntary schools, encountered the greatest possible opposition from the Education Department, and had to delay or abandon altogether the building of such schools because of the influence that was brought to bear in favour of the existence of the voluntary schools. What they asked the hon. Baronet to undertake was that all the schools that were properly condemned, which could not under any circumstances be made into efficient schools, should be replaced by really efficient schools. As regarded the others, they also would have to come under the purview of the hon. Baronet, and they desired that he should put the greatest possible pressure on the managers to put those schools into an efficient state. It was true that it would cost a considerable sum to put the schools in the state which the County Council thought proper. But that simply meant that the managers had not kept them efficient from year to year, otherwise only a small sum would now be necessary. There was one point which had arisen in Wales and would arise in London upon which an immediate answer was desired. The grant was given by the Education Department on behalf of particular schools, and he understood that in Wales the Department were insisting that the county councils should hand over to the particular schools their proportion of the grant, whether those schools were, or were not, in their opinion, in "a good state of repair." As the question would soon arise in London, he asked the hon. Baronet whether, in the case of a school condemned by the County Council as not being in a good state of repair, he would insist on the County Council keeping that school in existence and giving it the Government grant. Speaking on the matter generally, he was glad the question had been raised, as it had afforded an opportunity for discussion, and for directing public attention to a report which had come upon many people as a considerable surprise and shock.

Mr. WHITLEY (Halifax) said he was very glad that this question had been raised, although he did not hope to get much satisfaction from the Board of Education in regard to it. This was a question which affected not only London and Wales, but every part of the country. He wished to remind the hon. Baronet of a Question which was put to him upon this subject before the Act came into operation. He was asked whether the local education authority would be justified in refusing to take over certain schools until certain alterations had been made, and the reply given by the Department was that they must take them over as they were, and then take their chance of being able to bring pressure to get the repairs done and the alterations made. Let the House remember what took place last year when the Defaulting Authorities Act was passed. The one Amendment they moved was that there should be a public inquiry before the Act was put into force, at which the managers and the public authorities should be allowed to state their case. As one of the very few Members who were allowed to speak upon that measure before it was guillotined, he ventured to say that the very object of that Act was to prevent a public inquiry, and to allow a backstairs' influence to be the prevailing influence in these matters. The whole case had now been proved to be what was predicted at that time. According to the Act of 1902 the Board of Education would be compelled to agree with the local education authority, if it refused to maintain a school which was not in a proper sanitary condition. They had been told that the Board of Education had been advised by the law officers of the Crown, but not one of them was present to answer that Question. Where were they? Not long ago he asked a Question about the salaries and fees received by the law officers of the Crown which appeared on the Estimates, and now when they really wanted their advice upon a question of the highest importance they did not put in an apearance. He should like to know if the hon. Baronet would send for the law officers in order that the House might be told before the debate closed what was their opinion as to the proper interpretation of this clause. It was a matter of health, and, indeed, a matter of life and death to some of the children, and when the law officers were drawing salaries and fees amounting to £19,000 a year, he thought they ought to be in their places ready to answer a Question of this kind. The Board of Education said that they had been advised that the local authority had no right to insist upon sanitary conditions as a condition——

*Sir WILLIAM ANSON: I am not aware that any such statement has been made.

Mr. SAMUEL EVANS asked whether the action of the Merionethshire County Council with regard to such schools was not based upon the fact that they waived their right under this clause to call upon the proprietors of voluntary schools to put them into a state of good repair?

*Sir WILLIAM ANSON: No.

Mr. WHITLEY: That is a very faint "no."

*Sir WILLIAM ANSON: I am prepared to make it as emphatic as the hon. Member pleases.

Mr. WHITLEY said that reply made it all the more important that they should have the opinion of the law officers upon it. He thought the local authorities were entitled to know exactly what their position was in this matter. Were they or were they not bound to maintain the schools when a reply which was tantamount to a refusal was given to them? They had been accustomed to doles of this kind on the part of the Board of Education, but they should not forget that it was put before them as one of the chief reasons in favour of this Act that all that sort of thing would be done away with in the future. Even the hon. Member for Camberwell had stated that in his opinion, after the passing of this Act, the bolstering up of undesirable schools because certain doctrines would be taught in them would be done away with, but they had found that that was not by any means the case, and things were just as bad in that respect as they were before. The Board of Education was not willing to allow these things to be settled by a public inquiry, but by some device which was now apparently denied by the head of the Department, or some influence which they had no means of investigating, these things were decided against the local education authorities, and so the administration was as bad as ever, and they had all the other evils which had arisen to put up with at the same time.

MR. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.) said he hoped that the Board of Education, when they considered this report, would have due regard to the economy of the rates, and would not press too strongly for the immediate closing of these schools. He did not base his request that they should have consideration of that kind upon the same grounds as those put forward by his hon. friend. The Board of Education were bound to see that the bargain at the bottom of the Act was properly carried out. That bargain was that the burden of maintaining the teaching, etc., should be on the public, but that the managers of the voluntary schools should present for the free use of the public a sanitary and suitably constructed school building. There were some ninety cases in London now revealed to the full light of day where sanitary and properly constructed schools did not exist. The Board of Education would be called upon to decide between the managers and the London County Council, which was in the right and which was in the wrong. They all wanted reasonable arrangements to prevail. They did not want undue haste. They did not want a system to be put into operation all at once that would make it impossible for these schools to go on and throw into the streets a number of children for whom school places could not be provided. But so far he was not satisfied that the Board of Education would look at this question from a new point of view, a point of view justified by the Education Act of 1902, and which was not possible before the Act was passed.

Before the Act the Education Department had to consider that there was not everywhere a local authority charged with the duty of providing and maintaining these schools. They had to consider that if a school were closed by their action on account of being insanitary and improperly furnished there might be a difficulty in providing another school in its place, and they perhaps wisely proceeded with a certain amount of delay and caution where it was necessary to close or bring to an end an insanitary school. That day had now passed. The excuse before the Act for showing leniency towards schools of certain churches in the country had been taken from them. What he wanted to be sure of was that in London and elsewhere the attitude of the Secretary to the Board of Education would be impartial and not biassed by a preference for the schools of any particular church, but that the Board of Education would call upon the local managers who did not perform their part of the bargain to carry it out. Poverty had been pleaded as an excuse for not keeping the schools in proper repair by an hon. Member who represented Roman Catholics, but he did not recognise that as a valid argument. The cost was not excessive, and the pleading of poverty by people who spoke of deep conscientious motives, and something they would never surrender, was rather an anticlimax. It was certainly inconsistent. When he remembered that the hon. Member's co-religionists in France spent on their schools £2,500,000, he listened with a certain amount of impatience to those who said that poverty prevented persons of a particular faith from spending a few hundred pounds to put a school in a decent sanitary condition. He was glad that the revelation had come. For many years past he had said that the great bulk of the voluntary schools were unfitted for the purpose of education. They were bad in respect of furniture, air, lighting, and space. He thought they might ask the Board of Education, while exercising certain reasonable caution, to act towards managers of these schools with firmness. If the Board did so it would be found that they would put their hands in their pockets and provide the money necessary for the improvement of these schools. If the managers did not do that he hoped the Board of Education would step between the managers and the local authority and have the schools closed.

Mr. ROBSON (South Shields) said one Question had arisen in the course of the debate to which it seemed to him the hon. Baronet should give a definite and specific Answer. He had given as a reason for not dealing with the report now, that he had not had an opportunity of considering it, and he had stated that he would approach it in due time in a judicial spirit. He did not wish to commit himself now with regard to the conclusions at which he might ultimately arrive in regard to the report. But the debate had disclosed another doubt and difficulty in the minds of hon. Members on this subject. Was or was not the hon. Baronet going to regard the pleading of poverty as a valid excuse for non-compliance with the Act when managers were called upon to put schools in good order? Was the pleading of poverty a reason for delaying the putting of schools in order, or for leaving the obligations alone altogether? That was not a matter in which the hon. Baronet should be in any doubt. He listened to the hon. Member for South Down with considerable sympathy. The hon. Member stated that the difficulty of his co-religionists was that they were without financial means. He himself did not know whether the hon. Baronet considered that he was entitled to take that into consideration at all. If he did conceive himself entitled to consider the question of poverty on the part of those responsible for the condition of these schools, then he ought to inform the country. That would give rise to a most important question of principle—a question of principle which the House ought to be put in possession of, not, indeed, to-night, but at some later stage. He was quite sure the hon. Baronet would do his best to give an Answer to the Question whether or not he thought it right to take into consideration the poverty of school managers or school subscribers as a reason why they should be permitted to avoid the obligations cast upon them by the Act.

Mr. WILLIAM JONES (Carnarvonshire, Arfon) said the House was entitled to an Answer after the revelations as to the condition of schools in London and throughout the country. Was the hon. Gentleman going to bring pressure upon the educational authorities or upon those managers who, in the name of religion, neglected those schools?

Mr. MACVEAGH said he was sure the hon. and learned Gentleman did not wish to misrepresent him. He did not plead the poverty of Roman Catholics as a reason why they should not place their schools in good condition. What he said was that out of their poverty the Irish Catholics in this country had built their schools and made great sacrifices.

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich) said he wished to ask the Secretary to the Local Government Board whether there was any likelihood of any action being taken, even in the remote future, in the Metropolitan area to make some arrangement both with respect to the treatment of children and the equalisation of the Poor Law administration. In the Local Government Act of 1888 a clause was inserted enabling the county council to contribute 4d. per day on the average number of persons in the workhouses previous to the year 1888. Since that time there had been a very large increase in the number of persons in the workhouses, and that had formed a very heavy burden indeed on the poorer districts of the Metropolitan area. The Government had been asked to introduce a Bill if necessary to bring the average up to date, and the Poor Law Unions Association suggested that the average number of persons in workhouses should be calculated from year to year. In his district they would be willing to accept an average of two years. Another hardship from which they suffered in Poplar was that where there was no accommodation for children in the workhouse schools they were penalised to the extent of 5d. per day, while the children were not taught.

During the last winter they had been obliged to deal with an abnormal number of people in granting them outdoor relief. The Chief Secretary for Ireland, who was then at the head of the Local Government Board, very properly asked the board of guardians in providing relief in time of distress to have regard first to the man who was usually in ordinary employment, and not to the chronic "out-of-work." The Poplar Council did provide work for 1,000 men, and in this way they preserved their manhood; but as there were 3,000 applications for help 2,000 men had to go on the poor rate. They in Poplar did their duty, but it was at a very considerable expense. The rates in Poplar were up to 12s. in the £. There was an enormous aggregation of casual labourers in the South-East of London, and the boards of guardians were obliged to deal with them in times of emergency at great expense; but it was because Poplar had done its duty in this respect that it had been held up before the world as being the heaviest rated borough in the kingdom. He maintained that there should be a central board, and one Metropolitan rate for the Poor Law. It might be said, did they expect a West End parish to contribute to an East End parish without having any control? His reply to that was that they in the East End were prepared to give any control asked for. If Marylebone had to raise a rate on the Poplar assessment that borough would have to levy 19s. 0¾d. in the £, instead of 7s. as at present. There should be a better equalisation of rates all over the Metropolitan area.

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: That seems to require legislation. The present discussion must be confined to administrative matters only.

Mr. CROOKS said he thought that the late President of the Local Government Board had stated that many of these matters might be adjusted by administrative arrangements. Since the Education Department had taken the responsibility of examining the children in the Poor Law schools, why should they not go a little further and put these children under the education authority and not under the Poor Law, why not take away the children from the Poor Law taint altogether? The children now under the Metropolitan Asylums Board ought also to be placed under the Education Department, which now dealt with every kind of children, including cripples.

*Sir WILLIAM ANSON said he could only speak by the indulgence of the House, but would, if permitted, answer certain Questions addressed to him. He had been asked whether poverty was an excuse for the imperfect maintenance of the fabric of a school. He had never heard such an excuse made. The school must be maintained in a suitable condition whether those who maintained it were poor or not. If they were too poor to maintain the school they must give up the maintenance of it. He was also asked whether decent repair would be insisted upon by the Board of Education as a condition of the maintenance of a school. That was so. The Act required that the managers should keep the school in good repair, that the local authority was not bound to maintain the school unless it was in good repair, and that every question of repair must be dealt with as it arose and the reasonableness of the demands of the local authority had to be dealt with by the Board of Education. He would answer the Question of the hon. Member for Glamorgan in this way. A local authority, not having given any notice of requirements as to repairs to the managers of voluntary schools, and having received the Parliamentary grants for a whole year in respect of those schools, but not having adequately maintained them, could not at the end of the year set up an alleged disrepair as a ground for refusal to maintain them in a proper condition. He was not aware that there had been delay on the part of the Board of Education in dealing with these matters.

Mr. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion) said it was for the owners of a school to see that it was in good repair and no notice was required on the part of the county authorities. When the latter inspected a school and found it was not in proper repair then they were to stop the maintenance at once without notice. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Board of Education had assumed that there was a provision which required them to give notice, but that assumption was not warranted. The Act only authorised the local authorities to maintain the schools so long as they were in repair. If the local education authority had expressed the opinion that a particular school was not in repair and then proceeded to maintain that school it would be the duty of the auditors to surcharge. Take the case of the London County Council. Say it was convinced that a number of schools were not in repair, if, notwithstanding that, it proceeded to maintain them the auditor should surcharge the County Council of London and refuse to sanction the payments they had made in respect of those schools which they had themselves pronounced inefficient. He thought they might ask the President of the Local Government Board to tell them the direction which would be given to Poor Law auditors in that respect.

Question put, and agreed to.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1905-6.

Class I.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £31,700, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for the Houses of Parliament Buildings."—

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

EVENING SITTING.

NORTH BRITISH RAILWAY (GENERAL POWERS) BILL.

[Second Reading.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said that so far as the matters which caused the postponement of this Bill were concerned, they had now been considered by the portion of his constituency affected, and he did not consider it necessary further to oppose the Second Reading.

MASTER of ELIBANK (Edinburgh, Midlothian) said his original intention was to oppose the Bill, but having mentioned privately to the noble Lord opposite the points of his objection, he hoped that when the time came for the North British Railway Company to consider the question of the Highland Society visiting Peebles-shire they would consider the very considerable grievance of the county in the matter.

Bill read a second time, and committed.

GREAT NORTHERN (IRELAND) AND MIDLAND RAILWAYS BILL [BY ORDER].

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [12th April], "That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Great Northern (Ireland) and Midland Railways Bill to omit Clause 33 of the Bill."

Question again proposed.

Mr. WOLFF (Belfast, E.) said that since this matter was last before the House the difference which existed between the promoters of the Bill and the Urban Council of Portadown had been settled. It had been arranged to omit Sub-sections 2 and 3 of Clause 33, and he moved to amend the proposed Instruction accordingly.

Amendment proposed—

"After the word 'omit,' to insert the words 'Sub-sections (2) and (3) of.'"—(*Mr. Wolff.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.) said that as the Amendment of his hon. friend practically conceded all that those whom he represented in the matter required, he had no objection to the proposal.

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to

Ordered, that it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Great Northern (Ireland) and Midland Railways Bill to omit Sub-sections (2) and (3) of Clause 33 of the Bill.

PHYSICAL DETERIORATION.

*MR. SLACK (Hertfordshire, St. Albans), in moving, "That, in the opinion of this House, local education authorities should be empowered (as unanimously recommended by the Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration, 1904) to make provision, under such regulations and conditions as they may decide, for ensuring that all the children at any public elementary school in their area shall receive proper nourishment before being subjected to mental or physical instruction, and for recovering the cost, where expedient, from the parents or guardians," expressed his sense of obligation to the hon. Members for Hoxton and Barnard Castle for withdrawing their Bills dealing with this subject in order to make way for the present Resolution, which, he considered, dealt with an issue which was absolutely vital to the well-being of the country. Both sides would agree that though it was Tuesday night this was not an academic question, though it was a school question; and that it was not a Party question, though he wished it to be a Parliamentary question.

The Report of the Physical Deterioration Committee was so important a document that no apology was necessary for devoting one evening to a discussion of its contents. That Committee was appointed by the Duke of Devonshire on September 2nd, 1903, in consequence of the serious allegations concerning physical deterioration of certain classes of population as shown by the large percentage of rejections for physical causes of Army recruits. The recruiters or recruiting sergeants were trained to reject "rubbish" as the would-be recruit who failed to pass the medical examination was significantly termed, but, notwithstanding this preliminary investigation and sifting, in 1901 no fewer than 29 per cent. of those submitted by the recruiting sergeant for examination by the medical officer were rejected, and in 1902 the percentage had gone up to 32. This was one cause of the appointment of the Committee; another was the significant Report of the Royal Commission on Physical Training in Scotland, in which it was stated—

> "We think that an obligation for the proper supervision of the feeding of those who come for instruction should be regarded as one of the duties of school authorities, and that teachers should be instructed to take note of all children apparently ill-fed. Unless children receive sufficient nourishment they cannot be expected to profit by the mental or physical training provided for them."

Therefore the Physical Deterioration Committee was appointed to ascertain the facts, to indicate the causes, and to suggest means for effectually checking the physical deterioration complained of. That Committee examined no fewer than sixty-eight witnesses of the highest official and scientific experience, seven of whom were specially nominated to give evidence by the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons and the British Dental Association; and the Report was absolutely unassailable in its scientific accuracy, exhaustive in its evidence, and convincing in its conclusions. No fewer than fifty-three separate recommendations were made, dealing with such causes of deterioration (amongst others) as the feeding of elementary school children, alcoholism, over-crowding, milk supply, juvenile smoking, and the housing of the working classes, to each of which a Tuesday evening might well be devoted. In his judgment there was an obligation thrown upon the House by this important Report to crystallise the recommendations so as to arrest this declared evil.

The one subject to which the present discussion would be limited was not new, as the hon. Member for Hoxton brought it before the House on April 20th, 1902, and it had already been discussed incidentally upon the Estimates in the present session. But since last April the Report of this Committee had been issued and public interest in the question thereby stimulated. Underfed children were, so to speak, "in the air." He had received from Mr. Prichard, a guardian of Lambeth, a list of the resolutions passed at the 20th Annual Conference of the School Attendance Officers' Association, and amongst those resolutions he found the following—

> "That, in the opinion of this conference, the time has arrived when every care should be taken to note all children under or improperly fed attending schools under the compulsory Education Act, and that where cases are discovered meals should be provided by the State at the school."

and further—

> "That, in the opinion of this conference, the State maintenance of children is imperative in the public weal and should be chargeable to the National Exchequer."

Those were resolutions submitted to a body of men who had the best possible means of judging upon this subject, whose experience far transcended that of any other body of men in the country, whose duty it was to visit the children in their homes. But since the matter was discussed last year the position had changed; the facts were now before the country. The Resolution of last year was compulsory in form; it sought to lay an obligation on the Board of Education to require arrangements to be made for the feeding of improperly nourished school children; whereas the present Resolution was purely permissive, and sought only to empower local authorities to act if they thought fit.

The recommendations of the Physical Deterioration Committee might be summarised in one sentence, viz., that definite provision should be made by the various local authorities for dealing with the question of underfed children, and that safeguards should be provided against economic abuse. In dealing with this subject two facts had to be recognised: first, that for thirty-five years education in this country had been compulsory for all; and, secondly, that while this education had been a success for the many it had been a failure for the few. The hon. Member for North Camberwell, whose evidence before the Committee was invaluable, estimated that 80 per cent. of the working-class children of this country were better off to-day than they ever were, but that the condition of the other 20 per cent. was very unsatisfactory indeed. Dr. Eichholz, one of the expert witnesses before the Committee, was of opinion that 122,000 of the elementary school population of London or about 16 per cent. were underfed, and, speaking of the Johanna Street Board School in Lambeth, he declared that 90 per cent. of the children there were unable by reason of their physical condition to attend to their work. It was with the few who were unfit for their work as scholars that this Resolution asked the House to deal. All would agree—in the words of the Committee—that it was the height of cruelty to attempt to teach half-starved children. It was not only a cruel practice, but a wasteful and short-sighted policy. Education could not be grafted on to starvation. The attempt to teach underfed children was spoiling the ship for a ha'porth of tar. It involved enormous financial loss to waste efforts upon children who could not profit by the costly education provided for the mind whilst the body was left to starve. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University in his interesting evidence quoted the wife of the Rector of Tending, in Essex, who provided meals for the children in their school by cooking them in her own kitchen, as saying—

> "This is not charity, but far-sighted self-interest, because our children get far better grants if they are fed than if they are underfed, and we feed them for the purpose of getting more money out of the Government."

If this view were universal and universally acted upon there would be no need for the present discussion. All would agree that the intellectual and physical progress of underfed children must be inadequate and disappointing. The Report stated that no purely voluntary association could cope with the full extent of the evil. Dr. Robert Hutchison, perhaps the greatest living authority on nutrition, who was nominated by the Royal College of Physicians to give evidence, said—

> "It is essential economically to secure that every child under instruction should be more or less adequately nourished.
>
> "Looking at it purely scientifically, it would be an extremely important thing to ensure to every child at school a sufficient and proper sort of meal.
>
> "I feel certain that the provision of meals would do a great deal to improve the health and growth and development of the children of the poorer classes."

Dr. Hutchison regarded from ten to fifteen years of age as the critical period, and said that the provision of meals would check the waste of human material, and that arrest of development at that critical period could never be made good. That there was such an arrest of development was proved by the experiments conducted some years ago by the British Association for the Advancement of Science. Those experiments consisted in weighing and measuring boys between the ages of eleven and twelve years over a period of five years, and it was found that in the public schools, the boys of the so-called upper classes averaged in height 54·98 inches, while boys of the same age in industrial schools, the class with which this Resolution was concerned, averaged only just over fifty inches. He did not wish to weary the House with quotations from the evidence in the Report, but he wished to make one from Mr. W. H. Libby, who for thirty years had been a master in London schools. On p. 299 of the Report was to be found this remarkable testimony—

> "It always struck me that many children in the schools suffered from underfeeding, as evidenced by the difficulty they had in doing their mental work. About six months before I started this fund (the East Lambeth Teachers' Free Meal Fund) there were two or three boys in the school who seemed to be in great difficulties, and I said to them: 'Why cannot you get on with your work?' They said: 'Well, sir, we have had nothing to eat.' I said: 'What do you mean?' They said: 'We have had nothing since yesterday morning.' In order to prove the case, I sent down to a baker's shop, and asked the baker to oblige me with some of the driest crusts he had on the premises. He did so, and I gave them to the boys. I did not apparently watch them, but I kept my eye on them, and I can assure you that they ate ravenously, and in a very few minutes the whole of the dry bread was gone. I came to the conclusion then that they were positively hungry."

Mr. Slack.

There was a touch of something akin to a dumb heroism about those hungry lads; they looked up with their pale and sunken faces, and, in the words of Mrs. Browning—

> "They looked up with their pale and sunken faces,
> And their looks were sad to see."

It was heart-breaking to the teacher to attempt to teach such children, and it would be heart-breaking to the British nation when it realised the facts. Then Miss Deverell, an inspectress under the Board of Education, said—

> "I know one school where the master says that they get most of their meals by meeting workmen's trains and begging scraps from the men."

Other quotations might be given, but he would save the time of the House. The Report stated that in some cases voluntary organisations acting with the support and oversight of the local authority would be sufficient. It proved conclusively, however, that we dared no longer depend on fragmentary private philanthropy to deal with this national danger, but that organisation was in fact necessary to complete and co-ordinate sectional effort. Some such organisation as that suggested by the Resolution was necessary, in order to prevent overlapping of agencies, to promote economical and efficient administration of funds, and to direct the discovery of cases of real need. At present in centres where the bump of philanthropy was largely developed and funds were forthcoming the children were cared for, but in other centres, where the local sense of responsibility was dormant or funds were lacking, the children went unfed and education was a failure. The Resolution proposed to equalise this, though without discouraging private charity and voluntary effort. But no mere system, however good, would meet the case. It must be a system which could command the necessary funds.

Excellent systems existed in Vienna and Berlin, but they lacked funds and failed before they started. It was necessary that such an organisation should have official source and power, such as the local education authority, which should be empowered to supplement individual benevolence. Our neighbours across the Channel had courage in matters of education. In

France they had adopted the principle that every child receiving instruction at a State school should also be adequately nourished, at the public expense, if necessary. There were school societies in every arrondissement of Paris, and during the last year those societies provided 8,000,000 meals, at a cost of £70,000, of which £5,000 was charged on the rates, £20,000 was contributed by the parents in the purchase of coupons for meals, and £15,000 was contributed from voluntary subscriptions. In Austria, Switzerland, and Belgium the balance of cost was supplied by voluntary subscriptions, but the dinners were organised and sanctioned by the State school authorities. But here in Great Britain there was no common principle of action; there were only isolated and sporadic instances of dealing with the question, and all sorts of different organisations.

The Resolution suggested that local authorities should be empowered by law to make regulations for providing for the nourishment of under-fed children in school, and to make an alteration in the law to enable the local authorities, or possibly the guardians, to recover the cost from the parents who could afford to pay. The information supplied by the school attendance officers, coupled with that already in the possession of the managers and teachers, had been found in Lambeth to guarantee an almost absolute check against indiscriminate charity and economic abuse. It had been proved that a good breakfast could be supplied for a ½d., and a dinner for 1½d. Coupons should be issued for each meal; all coupons should be alike. Many parents would purchase the coupons, but they should be given to those whom the school attendance officers reported as being absolutely unable to pay for them. Many parents now gave their children 1½d. or 2d. to provide their own dinner, but the money was often very badly spent, and under such a system as he proposed these children would spend the money at the central hall where the meals were supplied. Many parents whose children now had their meals at home would be only too glad to buy the coupons in order to secure a better meal at a lower price than it cost at home. There was no desire to absolve parents from the first and natural duty of providing food for their own children. The new system would bring home parental responsibility in a way the present system did not. All the parents who were willing and able to pay would gladly buy the coupons; those who were able but unwilling would be made to pay, and a call of the school attendance officer, especially if he were in uniform, would generally produce good results, while, in the words of the Report—

> "A few prosecutions of neglectful parents would have a most salutary and stimulating effect."

In Lambeth the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children had rendered good service in bringing to book neglectful and criminal parents who had failed to do their duty in the way of supplying food to their children when able to do so. It had been proved that safeguards could be applied to such a system. It was necessary and, at the same time, possible, firstly, to protect the public purse and not discourage private philanthropy, next, to do nothing to weaken the sense of parental responsibility and self-reliance among the people, and lastly, but by no means least, sacredly to preserve the self-respect of the children themselves.

The funds necessary for this scheme might come from three and possibly four sources, first, from the parents themselves; secondly, from voluntary contributions; thirdly, from the poor rate, and possibly, at some future time, it might be necessary to ask for grants from the Exchequer. But a very small levy to remedy this evil would amply repay the commonwealth who would thus secure value for their money, because the better health of the children would be secured, and better health meant increased intelligence, brighter homes, a more contented people and more efficient workers, while at the same time a more regular attendance at school would be secured if meals were provided. It had been proved over and over again that where meals were provided in connection with the school, children attended much more regularly. Nothing disheartened a teacher so much as the frequent absence of his scholars; the child forgot what it had already learned, and the teacher had to begin again, which was disheartening to the teacher and unfair to the rest of the class. Working-class parents did make sacrifices for their children in this country, but where, through misfortune, illness, or accident, they were prevented or hampered in providing for their children, then they should be assisted without incurring the taint of pauperism. If parents were able to provide their children with food, but would not do so owing to their indulgence in drink, or in gambling, or through general thriftlessness or indifference, their duty should be brought home to them as it ought to be. Let them not allow the children to go hungry and start life handicapped for fear of the fetish of parental responsibility where it really did not exist.

He had seen it stated in newspapers that there were other remedies for this evil, such as reforms in the incidence of taxation, of the land laws, and in other ways, but he would point out that while those reforms were pending the children were suffering, money was being wasted, and the nation was deteriorating. What was wanted was a remedial organisation which should be co-extensive with the evil. They could not graft education on to starvation. There was nothing revolutionary in his proposals. The law already restricted the control exercised by parents over their children, and compelled the attendance of the children at school. The ages, hours, and places of children's employment were all limited by law. It was not sham Socialism but it was real patriotism and general Imperialism. It was the shortage of men fit to serve in the Army that first drew attention to this deterioration and so to the indifferent physical condition of the children in the schools owing to the shortage of food. The future of the Empire, the triumph in social progress, and freedom of the British race depended not so much upon the strengthening of the Army as upon fortifying the children of the State for the battle of life. They came back to the experience of the Ancients that the *mens sana* depended largely upon the *corpus sanum,* that a well-nourished body was the essential condition of efficient education. He appealed to the House, not only on the ground of economy and efficiency in education, but he urged that they should not turn a deaf ear to the cry of these hungry little ones whom they had driven into the schools, but the tragedy of whose warped and hungry lives they were so slow to understand. He begged to move.

*MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said the House had listened to the speech of the hon. Member who had just sat down with the deepest interest. Few questions which had engaged the attention of the House had passed so rapidly from the domain of academic discussion to that of practical politics. According to one of the Poor Law inspectors, what happened now was that people who were thoroughly able to provide food for their children preferred to spend their money on gin and horse-racing. What the House wanted to know was had those parents been prosecuted, and if they had not whether the children had been fed. He believed neither the one nor the other had been done, which showed that there was an evil which under the existing law should be immediately redressed. The blame for this state of things attached not only to the Government of the day, but to that Party which sought to supplant it. The Government of the day, although armed with an immense amount of evidence, with all the testimony which practical and scientific opinion could give upon the subject, said that nothing could be done except to issue a circular to the various local authorities of the kingdom, because further inquiry was necessary. The demand for further inquiry was based upon the fact that a child attending school in a hungry condition was only one reason why the education of the poorer classes was ineffective. Slum dwellings, long hours, low wages, no wages, rural depopulation and alien immigration, had made "Home" in most of the poorer parts of London and of the great towns, a misnomer; but if that was so the school feeding of the children had become more imperative than ever it was. It was no answer to say that by the gradual general improvement in the country the ill-fed child would disappear. What they had to do now and here was to deal with the underfed child and adopt as the ultimate remedy those more gradual reforms which the Government seemed to rely on. Immediate steps should be taken to feed the children, because those gradual reforms to which he had alluded would take something like a generation to effect, and if the children were left as they were now, regarding it as a cold-blooded commercial speculation, the money spent upon their education would be wasted, the result being great dissatisfaction on the part of the ratepayers, while the children would grow to incompetent citizens.

What hope could be gathered from either of the Front Benches? From the Front Bench opposite not a syllable of sympathy had come, not a breath of suggestion had emanated from that quarter notwithstanding the famous statement that 13,000,000 of our people lived upon the verge of starvation. The Leaders of the Opposition showed their interest in the children of this country by their conspicuous absence. It was to the back benches of the Opposition that they had to go to find community of feeling and unity of ideas with those on the Ministerial side of the House who believed that this social reform was absolutely necessary if the people in this country were to be prosperous and healthy in the future. The authorities who had the administration of the existing law could not be regarded either as the best friends of legislative improvement in this matter. The education committee of the London County Council had just presented a report to the Council in which they did not even deal with the hon. Member for Camberwell in a kindly spirit, but described him and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Cambridge University as "dangerous persons and outsiders exercising a demoralising effect among the scholars of the London County Council school in Johanna Street." He might say that that report was adopted in spite of the strong protest of the hon. Member for Battersea. The London County Council was the local authority responsible for more poor children than any authority in the world. They failed, however, to recognise that the huge sums they were spending on education would, in the case of many thousands of children, be utterly wasted. As to the fear of destroying parental responsibility, that responsibility could not be exercised when the parent was unable to pay, and as matters now stood the neglectful parent was at liberty to starve his child. He hoped the Government would pass a measure this session conferring on local authorities power to deal with the matter.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, local education authorities should be empowered (as unanimously recommended by the Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration, 1904) to make provision, under such regulations and conditions as they may decide, for ensuring that all the children at any public elementary school in their area shall receive proper nourishment before being subjected to mental or physical instruction, and for recovering the cost, where expedient, from the parents or guardians."—(*Mr. Slack.*)

*SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.) deprecated any suggestion that this question was a Party matter, and said it seemed to him that it was essentially a question which should be discussed simply on its merits. They were all agreed as to the existence of the evil, the only difference was as to the best mode of treating it. He desired to move, as an Amendment, that local education authorities should be empowered to make provision for recovering the cost "from the parents, and that when the parents are unable to defray the cost the relief be supplied by the Poor Law." It seemed to him obvious that the introduction into our schools of a system of feeding some of the children would in a short time result in the whole of the children being fed. Would this really be beneficial to the country or to the poor themselves? He admitted that hungry children must be fed, but the existing law provided that, if they were not fed by their parents, that they should be fed at the public cost, at the same time imposing disqualifications for certain purposes on the parents. That was the law at present.

If the parent of every child who received this relief was to be regarded as a pauper, then it should be understood distinctly that this was the case. He understood, however, that that was not the intention.

Let them look into the facts of the case. Who were, after all, responsible for these children in the first instance? Surely they must acknowledge that the parents were responsible. It was all very well to talk in a somewhat loose way of parental authority, but were they going to recognise that the first duty of a parent to his children was not to be enforced, and were they going to relieve parents from this responsibility? By the acceptance of this Motion they would be undermining the very basis of the structure of society and sowing the seed for the absolute destruction of the whole social fabric. The parents were without doubt responsible for the feeding of their children. His hon. friend had referred to a case in which an inspector stated that parents could carry out this responsibility if it were not for gin and horse-racing. Surely it was an extraordinary thing for them to pass a Resolution of this kind expressing pity and sympathy with these cases, whilst at the same time they acknowledged that the parents could feed their own children and yet did not feed them because gin and horse-racing prevented them. It was an extraordinary thing that the public should be asked to pay the expense of feeding these children while such a state of affairs existed. [Cries of "No, no!"] In his opinion that was the whole point, for they were asking by this Resolution that the children should be fed literally at the public expense. If they could only get rid of a certain amount of cant could anyone say, looking at London, where at almost every corner even in the poor districts a public-house was flourishing and where nearly £20 was spent by every family per annum in alcohol, that drink was not the cause of much of this. It had been said that the rich ran up this amount spent on alcohol, but that was not so to such an extent as to invalidate this argument. It was not right that they should say smooth and pleasant things and ignore facts. They should not ignore the fact that in the city of London, with all its poverty, if they could only do away with excessive drinking and betting there would be no need for any such proposal as was now being considered. Was it reasonable that they should pass legislation which tended to increase this evil? He said emphatically that what they wanted in order to make the people better was to increase their self-reliance and self-restraint. He did not think it could be said that a measure such as this tended in that direction.

Years ago when free education was given it was said that doing away with school fees would make things very much easier, and would enable parents to spend more money upon better food. Had free education had that effect? There might be many reasons why it was desirable to give free education, but had it really had the effect of enabling the poor people to make their children more comfortable and to supply them with more food. He emphatically said that it was not so, and, as a matter of fact, at the present time there was no doubt that the feeding of school children was not as well carried out as it was when they paid a small fee. Was it not a startling thing that those who had gone into this matter so closely acknowledged that in spite of free education children were not so well fed. At the same time was it not a fact that the people were earning at the present time more money than they were earning when free education was introduced. If the people were now earning more wages, living better, spending more on drink, and paying no fees for education, it did seem to him a very serious matter that it should now be proposed to take from parents the burden and responsibility of feeding their children. He did not himself wish to delay this discussion, and he only wished to make this formal protest. This was a subject in which he had taken an immense interest, and he had spent a good many years of his life endeavouring to make people thrifty and trying to promote self-reliance amongst them. In his opinion the essential condition of progress was self-reliance. This was the essential of our Christianity and of our very existence, and unless they could in

Sir George Bartley.

some way or other induce the people to think of the future, to consider their wants, and generally to act in a way which would tend to relieve them from the necessity of living from hand to mouth; unless they could induce them to put by something for a rainy day, their position would become gradually more serious.

A proposal like the one before the House seemed to him to strike at the root of any real progress of the people. He agreed that where children could not be fed and where parents were so poor that they could not possibly feed them the State should come in. But the State did that already. No doubt the failure of anybody to provide for his own was a sad thing, but it was a sadder thing for the nation itself so to degenerate as to regard this as almost a matter of course and not even to involve any consequences on the parents. The whole basis of this discussion was that they would be doing what was proposed without any taint of pauperism. Was it possible to relieve people at other people's expense without the taint of pauperism? Were they not simply trying to delude themselves by such an argument. If they relieved a person by providing the cost of feeding his children they might call it what they liked, but that person would be receiving parish aid, and they could not avoid it. His view was that this was a proposal fraught with enormous danger and his Amendment would make it less objectionable. If it were made clear, as his Amendment made it clear, that all relief was to be obtained from the parent, and that only those parents who were absolutely unable to pay should be relieved, then the evil would be minimised, and it was for that reason that he moved his Amendment.

They had been talking a great deal about the physical deterioration of the people. No one regretted that more than he did, but what was infinitely worse was the mental and moral and social deterioration of the people. This was a very serious question indeed, and although they were anxious in every way to do everything which was kind and right, he was sure hon. Gentlemen opposite would not think he had been induced to speak in this way other than by kindly feelings towards the poor. In his opinion it was not kind to the people to make them rely upon other people. On the contrary he thought it was the greatest unkindness they could do them, because it tended to demoralise them, and the true kindness was to make the poor know and feel their responsibility and impress upon them the necessity of looking to the future before they married and had families. They ought to know that they would not be allowed to foist their responsibilities upon the public without the usual consequences. Nothing demoralised a nation more and nothing led to more unhappiness among people than to diminish their self-reliance, and he desired to enter his protest against a scheme which must sap the very foundations of national and social well-being. He did this in the interests of the people and mainly in the interests of the very poor. He protested against this scheme, because it seemed to him to be fraught with enormous danger unless it was accompanied by such an Amendment as he had the honour to move.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham), in seconding the Amendment, said that the speech which they had just listened to was one well worthy of every consideration. It was very easy to get up in the House and dilate upon feelings, which they all felt, of sympathy with the poor children who were underfed. To him, however, it seemed much harder to get up and point out the evils which might arise from false philanthropy. Surely it was not true philanthropy to say to a young man that he might go and marry at eighteen years of age some girl of sixteen years of age; that he might have ten or twelve children and take no trouble to work for them, and then that somebody else who was married himself, and had done his best to provide his own children, should be called upon to contribute towards the maintenance of the children of other people. ["Hear, hear!" and laughter.] He really did not see what there was to cheer in that remark.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich) said that when the hon. Baronet stated that a man would provide his own children he hoped he would allow him to cheer that remark.

Sir FREDERICK BANBURY said that supposing, for the sake of argument, the Amendment of his hon. friend was not carried and the Resolution of the hon. Member opposite was adopted, what would be the result? The hon. Member opposite had guarded his proposal by saying that if it was expedient then the cost of feeding children should be recovered from the parents or guardians. What steps were being taken to ensure that it would be expedient? Pressure would be brought upon the guardians not to enforce this clause. Was it not human nature that if they could get something for nothing they would try to obtain it? That was human nature. If people discovered that their children were being fed, they would naturally ask why they should pay themselves when their children could get a good breakfast or a dinner for nothing. It had been argued that this should be done because it would improve the physical condition of the children. In his opinion good clothing was quite as necessary for the physical development of children as good food. Was it going to be held that they were not only to educate and feed but also to clothe the children? And when all that had been done he supposed it would be necessary to see that they had proper shelter, for that was a very important element in their physical condition. He had as much sympathy with poor people as any hon. Gentleman opposite, but he had spoken as he had because he believed in all sincerity that the very worst thing they could do in that House was to destroy the habit of self-reliance.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the words 'where expedient from the parent or guardians,' in order to add the words 'from the parents, and that when the parents are unable to defray the cost the relief be supplied by the Poor Law,'"—(*Sir George Bartley*.)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Dr. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.) said he would endeavour to seek for points of agreement on this subject. He thought they would all agree that there were many children who did go to school day by day suffering from lack of food, and that their unhappy condition called for prompt and earnest consideration on the part of the House. They were all agreed, he thought, that bread was more important to them than even the three R's. It must be agreed that it was torture to endeavour to teach the children when they were hungry, and that much of our educational expenditure from rates and taxes was necessarily wasted because of the physically unfit condition of the children. They did agree, most honestly and sincerely, that they must do nothing to undermine parental responsibility.

Sir GEORGE BARTLEY: Then why not accept my Amendment?

Dr. MACNAMARA said he would point out where he thought the hon. Baronet's Amendment was objectionable. The hon. Baronet's Amendment would throw the cost, where it was inexpedient to recover it from the parents, upon each parish. If it was left to the education authority, then they made it a county charge. For that, and for no other, reason he preferred the Resolution to the Amendment. There was no question of principle involved. He would pursue the parent with the utmost rigour of the law if he brought children into the world for his own pleasure and then neglected to provide for them.

Sir GEORGE BARTLEY: Would you agree to make the parent a pauper?

Dr. MACNAMARA said that, in the case of the parent who could make provision for his children but through thriftlessness or drunkenness or immoral living failed to do so, he would scarify him. The question of cost was a serious one, and a contribution from the Exchequer would be a necessity; but that a private Member could not propose; it would, he hoped, some day be a Government proposal. The one outstanding point of difference seemed to be whether this matter should be dealt with by private charity or become a public obligation. He began consideration of the subject twenty years ago, feeling confident that it should be dealt with by charity; but by hard facts he had been driven to the opinion that it should be a matter of public obligation, with every effort to obtain payment from a parent where payment was possible. For the charity that had provided funds for school meals every educationalist was most grateful; but charity broke down in time of great stress, and, moreover, it was the very method for emasculating the sense of parental responsibility to which so much importance was attached. Correspondents well acquainted with the facts had written to him insisting that there should be searching examination into the circumstances of a parent or guardian, because it had been the habit of careless parents not to provide their children with food knowing they would get meals from the fund. This was a demoralising system, and it was inadequate, for the contributions fell off as the winter passed, though the fact was that many of the poorer classes suffered severely from absence of work in the holiday season.

With regard to the Johanna Street School, Sir Charles Elliott had written a testimonial saying how well the fund at that school had been organised, how carefully the charity was distributed in such a way as not to cause demoralisation; a report of one of the relieving officers of the Lambeth Guardians upon the feeding of the children at this school stated that some of the parents visited stated that they did not give their children food before going to school because they knew that if they did not do so they would receive it at the school. There was the whole case at once. This wonderful system of charity was just the very scheme which influenced parents to send their children to school hungry in order to get free meals, because they knew that the hand of charity would deal with them there. He had received two interesting letters upon this subject. The first he would read was from Father Brown, who knew the poor of South London as well as any man living and who was a member of the London School Board for many years. He wrote—

"On the 16th November, 1897, I moved the following resolution at the London School Board:—'That it is expedient that the Board shall have power to supplement voluntary effort for the purpose of preventing the underfeeding of children who are compelled to attend public elementary schools in cases where it may be necessary.' This was rejected by twenty-eight votes to fifteen, the main reasons brought forward by its opponents being the alleged sufficiency of existing voluntary effort, and the undesirableness of an education authority dealing with matters which should be within the scope of a Poor Law administration. My views have not changed since 1897, and I should be prepared to support a similar motion were I still a member of the London Education Authority. As the Progressive Party on the Council decline to have me on that authority I am unable now to advocate the cause, but I may say that I have always felt that any system of providing meals for children in the schools would have to be safeguarded by searching examination into the circumstances and means of the parents or guardians, and by vigorous methods of compulsion towards those who were proved to be careless or neglectful of their parental duties. It is true that voluntary effort in some districts fully meets the needs of the case, but it is also true that the efficiency of any voluntary organisation depends very largely upon the varying earnestness and capability of those to whom the work of investigation and distribution is entrusted. I see that your Motion provides for the cost of the feeding being recovered from parents or guardians who are able to pay for it. I hope that if any practical proposal is brought forward by you or your friends, that it will be made clear that this condition will be unflinchingly insisted upon, and that parents who fail in their duty will incur the disabilities now attached to Poor Law relief. One of the weakest spots in the existing voluntary system of providing meals for underfed children is that no steps can be taken to prevent thriftless and dissolute parents from throwing the burden of supporting their children on to charitable agencies without incurring any penalty or disability for their gross neglect."

He entirely and emphatically associated himself with Father Brown's view. That was the present system and they desired to modify it. He had received another letter that morning equally interesting. His hon. friend who moved this Resolution referred to Mr. W. H. Libby, the secretary of the East Lambeth Teachers Association Scholars Free Meal Fund, who had worked so industriously in this cause. Upon this question he had written him a letter in which he said—

"I have very much pleasure in giving you my opinion as regards charitable agencies. In the first place they are inadequate because they only profess to meet the needs during the winter months. There are, however, many employments, such as gas workers, poor widows engaged in laundry work and charing, who find when the summer months approach work gets slacker. During July, August, and September, when the wealthier and middle classes are holiday-making, these poor folk find their work gone; consequently these months are looked forward to with positive dread. It seems strange to us—I am speaking of those who do not think of how the poor live, and I was one of them until I knew—but a holiday which is looked forward to with longing and pleasure by certain classes is to thousands of the poor a period of intense anxiety and suffering. It is then that their bit of work is gone and arrears of rent run up. We often think more of our favourite cat's welfare during a holiday than the charwoman's boy or girl. There is no charitable agency which is capable of properly meeting the needs of underfed children during the whole year round. These agencies are only popular as long as the weather is such as to stimulate charity."

The letter went on to show how this system was inefficient and demoralising.

He cordially endorsed his hon. friend's view in regard to the Parisian scheme. What he would suggest was that they should schedule the poor areas of each town and link about half-a-dozen schools together for this purpose. They could give each area a central dining hall and supply the parents with coupons which should be given to the children before they came to the school. The system in vogue in Paris resulted in 8,000,000 meals being supplied at a cost of £70,000, £45,000 of which came out of the rates and the rest from voluntary contributions.

At the time of Waterloo there was a popular doggerel which ran—

"Two skinny Frenchmen,
And one Portuguee;
One brawny Englishman
Was a match for all three."

But he feared that if the present condition of things was allowed to continue the skinniness would become the mark of the Englishman and the brawn the possession of the foreigner.

The point he and his friends wanted to make clear was that they were entirely against the undermining of parental responsibility. Their scheme would develop parental responsibility. He believed that conscience could be developed by legislation in these cases. The Education Act of 1870 made it compulsory for parents to send their children to school, and under the law of compulsion they did it. The result was that a class were coming to school to-day who would never have come except under compulsion. If the compulsory clause were abolished to-morrow—he did not say it should be—a large number of parents would send their children to school because the law had developed the sense of moral obligation. In the same way his hon. friend the Member for Peckham would find in this matter that if parents were made to do their duty under compulsion, the habit brought about by compulsion would become a moral obligation. The Motion before the House was a very simple one, and he hoped the Parliamentary Secretary would be able to say on behalf of the Government that they were going to accept it. In 1807 Mr. Whitbread moved a Motion in the House of Commons that it was the duty of the House to take into consideration the intellectual development of the people. The hon. Gentleman was described as a pestilential fellow, and his Motion was rejected by a large majority. It was considered then that it was right enough to teach the people to read, but to teach them to write and to do arithmetic meant the undermining of the foundations of society. Yet to-day the nation was spending £20,000,000 a year upon the intellectual development of the people. To-night, again, the phrase "undermining the foundations of society" was heard in the House of Commons. But he asked the Government who had appointed Royal Commissions to inquire into disease among grouse and for the improvement of horse-breeding to give some consideration to the children of the nation.

SIR W. HART DYKE (Kent, Dartford) said he did not wish to vote on this Motion without giving his reasons. He had had the honour for some years to represent a constituency which ran into the Metropolitan area. It represented a quarter of the area of the Metropolis, and, interested as he was in the subject of education, it would be impossible for him to look with indifference on this great and growing evil. He had always felt very anxious concerning it. He had been aware for many years that a great mass of sickly and stunted children were hurried into the primary schools who were unfit, both in regard to body and brains, to receive any education whatever. He had read the Report very carefully, and, although he was aware that the evil was in existence, the Report startled him very considerably indeed. The Report was made not by those who approached this question from the point of view of any crotchet or fad; it was the Report of a very strong Committee indeed. The members of it were not only thoroughly fit to deal with such a question but they were thoroughly able to sift the evidence on both sides, and to come to a determination in a careful and judicial manner. The Report teemed with evidence showing that this question demanded early settlement, and, knowing what he did concerning these matters, he found himself absolutely unable to say "No" to the Resolution before the House. The evil was there, and in seeking a remedy the first thing they ought to ask was—What does it all lead to? He had been told that if they were going to feed children they must also clothe them. He did not think that need be necessary if proper precautions were taken. In the first place a vast amount of voluntary effort had been going on for many years concerning this evil. One thing certain was that so far as the Metropolis was concerned voluntary effort could only touch a very small percentage of the evil, and he was not sure, as had been hinted in the debate, that in such a population as that of the Metropolis voluntary effort might not be somewhat dangerous. In other towns with more restricted areas it could be carried out with complete success. The State compelled children to attend school and that made the case distinct from any other.

Everything, to his mind, depended upon the machinery which they could apply to this case. It must be a *sine qua non* that such a machinery should provide a thorough and complete test of the position and responsibilities of the parent; and he thought the wording of the Resolution should be extended so as to bring in the aid of inspectors of the Local Government Board. Surely, however, the House had solved more difficult problems than this, and what had been done with success in Birmingham could be done in London. In a report with regard to the work done in Birmingham he found the following—

> "In considering the principles on which they would act it was decided in the first place that only those should be helped who could expect practically nothing if it was not given to them and secondly, that only such a meal should be given as would not compete in any way with the meal which could be provided even in a very poor home. It was next decided that cases for help should be selected with the greatest care. This is done by three different people—by the head teacher of the school, by the class teacher in whose class the boy or girl is, and by the visiting officer. The co-operation of these three, Dr. Airy states, has been so successful that he does not believe there has been 5 per cent., or anything like it, of abuse."

In Glasgow also a poor children's dinner table had been established with complete success. What could be done at Birmingham could with more careful inspection be done in all the schools of the Metropolis. As to parents who neglected their duties it could not be a bad thing for the State to put pressure on them, and if continued daily pressure were put upon them with respect to their obligations very great good might result. He would not support the Resolution if he did not believe that some machinery could be devised to carry it out.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil) said there was one feature of the debate which was entirely new. It was no longer said that this matter should be left to private charity. The dispute at the present moment between those who supported and opposed the Motion was as to whether the money necessary was to come from the education fund or the poor fund. That was a very important point gained. He understood the contention of the hon. Baronet who moved the Amendment was that the parents whose children had to be provided for were in a condition of poverty because of their own thriftlessness and intemperate habits. He desired most emphatically to protest against that assumption. The investigations made by Mr. Booth in London, and Mr. Rowntree at York, proved conclusively that one-third of the population were in poverty not because they were intemperate or because they indulged in betting, but because the wages they received were not sufficient to provide them with the requirements of comfort and decency. Were people in that condition to be punished twice, first by denying them a living wage in exchange for their labour, and next by pauperising them? A great deal had been heard about parental responsibility. If parents realised their responsibilities properly the House would not be discussing this question to-night. What the supporters of the Motion desired was to develop parental responsibility. In this connection he would quote the opinion of a man whose testimony would be accepted. Dr. Chalmers, medical officer of health for the city of Glasgow, at a recent conference on this question, used these words—

> If we accused the casual and inefficient of failing in his duty to the State, might not we in turn quite reasonably ask why the State acquiesced in conditions affecting his childhood which made him inefficient and dependent upon casual labour ?"

The point made by Dr. Chalmers was that if they starved people in their childhood the next effect was they grew up with weakened will and loss of self-respect. It was absurd to expect any strong sense of parental responsibility on the part of men and women who grew up under those conditions. What the Motion proposed was that so far as feeding was concerned the conditions should be supplied which would make it possible for a child to develop a healthy body without loss of self-respect. He quoted from the report of a committee which was investigating this problem in North and North-West London schools to show that in a St. Pancras school 141 children came from 116 families where the father was out of work, and fifty-eight children belonged to forty four fatherless families. Individual cases also disclosed inability through lack of work to provide properly for the children.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY said he did not wish to say anything hard in regard to these cases. If they received relief from public charity, or public alms, that did not effect the fact that they were pauperised.

MR. KEIR HARDIE said there was a very real difference. Pauperism was the taint which they attached to those who were in want through their own lack of thrift. That was the sense in which every Member of this House desired to see the taint of pauperism applied. But would any Member of the House say that if a respectable and sober man and wife got into destitute circumstances through no fault of their own they were to be pauperised as they had seen lately.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY: You cannot help it.

MR. KEIR HARDIE said they could help it. They were not tied down to the Poor Law relief. They had the option of giving relief from the education rate and the borough rate, and by that means they could remove from the relief given the stigma that attached to relief given in connection with the administration of the Poor Law. If the hon. Member did not want to say hard things he would withdraw his Amendment and allow a unanimous vote to be given on this question. As to the argument of parental responsibility he ventured to say that the children of hon. Members on both sides of the House were sent to boarding schools where meals and accommodation were provided for them, and the home life of the families was broken up for six or seven months of the year. The provision of school meals for which the parents would pay when able would no more interfere with parental responsibility and family ties than did the provision for hon. Members' families at boarding schools. The Education Department and the Local Government Board should be more helpful pending legislation. In the Inter-Departmental Committee's Report on Physical Deterioration there was a paragraph which stated that—

> "In the carrying out of their recommendations for the rectification of acknowledged evils the Committee do not rely upon any large measure of legislative assistance ; the law may with advantage be altered and elaborated in certain respects, but the pathway to improvement lies in another direction. Complacent optimism and administrative indifference must be attacked and overcome, and a large-hearted sentiment and public interest take the place of timorous counsels and sectional prejudice."

He maintained that if the two Departments were to lay that sentence to heart, and got rid of "timorous counsels and sectional prejudice," and faced the question boldly, they could do something immediately to relieve the situation. Afterwards they could have such legislation as was necessary to enable the education authorities to lay the foundation on which to build up an educated citizenship. They denied the opportunity to men of earning wages, and then they penalised the children because the parent had not earned sufficient wages to maintain them in health. He hoped that the result of this debate would be that a new spirit would be infused into the Department, and that the scandal and disgrace of children starving in the midst of plenty would be ended.

Sir JOHN GORST (Cambridge University) said that thanks to the Answer of the President of the Local Government Board there was no longer any doubt as to the rights of these hungry children. They had a right to be fed at the public expense and immediately, quite irrespective of the character of their parents, as soon as their destitute condition was known. That right had been very imperfectly satisfied; and for years these children had been defrauded of the relief to which they were legally entitled. But now the right was established it was for the Board of Education to make it a little easier for the children to get what they were entitled to. The first thing the Board could do was to establish medical inspection in all the schools. If the medical profession were once let into the schools most of what he and others contended for would follow. The Board could give notice in one Code, and enforce in the next, that no grant would be made to any school which did not provide a system of medical inspection satisfactory to the Board. That had been done in the case of the provision of cloak rooms in the schools. He only feared that the Board was now endeavouring to frame some universal system of medical inspection to be applied to all schools alike. Nothing could be a greater mistake than that. He hoped the Board of Education would confine itself to requiring medical inspection approved by them, and leave it to the particular locality, which must necessarily be much better able to do so, to construct the particular scheme most appropriate to that place. They also wanted the Board of Education to go a step further. At present the food which those children were entitled to, and which, he supposed, in a roundabout way they would now procure—because there ought not to be a single hungry child in an elementary school if the law enunciated by the President of the Local Government Board were carried into execution—came from the Poor Law authorities. It would be very much more convenient, expeditious, and free from Poor Law taint, if it was provided by the education authorities. In the case of Bradford, he believed they gave a salary to the Lord Mayor expressly for that purpose.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE: They afterwards withdrew it; the Liberals would not let them have it.

Sir JOHN GORST said he knew that in other cases there had been contributions from the rates. What was asked now was that the Board of Education should, at all events next year, give power to the local authority, if they thought fit, to spend the education rate in the provision of dinners and other meals at their schools. Unfortunately, the Committee just appointed to reconsider the recommendations of the other strong Committee was expressly debarred from recommending any kind of provision of school meals which would be a charge upon the rates. That shut them off from what everybody who had spoken in that debate wished to be done by the education authority. Extreme zeal was displayed by some people for the reformation of the thriftless parent, but in that matter he cared most for the child, believing that to be good economy and good Imperialism. It was the system of voluntary charitable relief which was really undermining parental responsibility. If the thing was done by the public authority, the provision of school meals could be prevented from in any way interfering with parental responsibility.

*The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the BOARD of EDUCATION (Sir William Anson, Oxford University) said he was glad to hear the mover of the Resolution say that this was not a Party question. They were all agreed that it was a question in which they had a common interest. It appealed to them on two sides—on the economical side, because the immense sums which were spent on education were not profitably spent if the children were not in a condition to receive the instruction which was offered to them, and on the side of human sympathy, because they all desired that the poor children in these slum schools should get their teaching under as favourable conditions as could be provided for them without the demoralisation involved in a large system either of private benevolence or of public charity.

There were one or two features in the Report of the Departmental Committee which were of a more cheering character than some hon. Members had admitted. One of the most satisfactory features was that we were improving in physique and not going back. Another feature of the Report that had been forgotten by some hon. Members who had spoken of the hardship of driving these children into public elementary schools was that there was evidence given before the Committee to the effect that the physique of the children, whether fed or unfed, steadily improved during the time they were present in the public elementary schools.

When they were asked to carry into effect the unanimous recommendation of the Departmental Committee that local authorities should be empowered to make definite provisions "under such regulations and conditions as they might decide," he must call the attention of the House to the actual terms of the Report and of the recommendation. The unanimous recommendation of the Physical Deterioration Committee was that the local authorities should make definite provisions, not as they might decide, but in accordance with the methods indicated in paragraphs 358 to 365 of the Report. In these paragraphs the Committee stated that there was no doubt that a large number of children habitually attended school underfed, that the number varied locally with the time of year and the conditions of employment, that it was not likely to increase, and that they saw various causes at work which would lead to its diminution. In a very large number of cases voluntary organisation, with the support of local bodies, was sufficient for the purpose, and so long as this was the case they would strongly deprecate recourse being had to direct municipal assistance. Therefore, contrary to what they had heard that night, the Committee definitely recommended that, so long as organised charity could do the work, recourse should not be had to direct municipal assistance. The Committee went on to say that circumstances did arise which called for more immediate aid, and they endorsed the recommendation of the Royal Commission on Physical Training to the effect that local authorities should be empowered to provide for the preparation and cooking of meals as a charge incident to school management, but only where it was found necessary to provide for them. They went on to say that the combination of local resources and voluntary effort might be usefully employed in certain cases. The Committee also contemplated a state of things in which these arrangements might still be inadequate, and in these cases, they said, it might be expedient to promote the application of the municipal aid on a larger scale, not "as the local authority might decide," but subject to the consent of the Board of Education and with the concurrence of the Poor Law authorities. There was another paragraph which dealt with a large group of cases to which insufficient attention had been given—the cases of children placed in the category of "retarded." The Committee thought they might be dealt with by means of special schools; but whether such schools should be established, or the children should be merely treated as underfed, must be left to the local education authority, acting with the concurrence of the Poor Law authorities. The Committee wound up by saying that by this means protection was given against the dangerous doctrine that free meals were a necessary concomitant of education. These recommendations indicated limitations to the application of municipal support and a number of safeguards that were absent from the Resolution before the House.

Sir William Anson.

He dealt first with the cases of children who came to school underfed or were alleged to be underfed. It was exceedingly difficult to be on sure ground in ascertaining the number of these cases. As was said by a lady of great experience in these matters in a letter published in the *Manchester Guardian* on April 8th, it was only those who spent much time with the children and their parents, and were able to go behind the scenes and did not judge by appearances of poverty, who were able to get at the actual facts. Charitable people were often misled by appearances, and something of the kind seemed to have occurred in regard to the distinguished party visiting the Johanna Street School. Ninety-six children were reported.

Sir JOHN GORST said that was not so. A list was given to the Lambeth Board of Guardians and certified by Dr. Hutchinson, but these were not the cases reported by his party.

Dr. MACNAMARA asked what the hon. Baronet was quoting from.

*Sir WILLIAM ANSON said he was quoting from the report of the relieving officer who followed in the track of the deputation. These were cases of alleged underfed children attending Johanna Street School belonging to fifty-six families. In twenty-five of these cases there was evidence that the children were fed; in eleven cases there was no direct evidence that they were fed, but there was evidence implying it, and showing that the parents had means to feed them; in ten cases the parents were very poor, and he would not deny that the whole report presented an aspect of distressing poverty; in these ten cases some of the parents were receiving Poor Law relief, and in ten cases the relieving officer could ascertain nothing. He called attention to some of the cases. One case was that of a man in full work, earning 5s. a day. He had five children. There had been no necessity to apply for relief, and there was no desire to do so. In another case a woman who certainly was poor, with one child, stated that her boy always had a good breakfast and dinner before going to school. The boy had informed the relieving officer that he had no food that morning. There was a case in which the father, a farrier, earned 25s. a week, and when in full work 35s. The children had gone to school without food when they knew that food would be given them. In another case a plasterer earning £1 a week did not see why his children should not be fed at school as well as the children of other people. There was a case in which the earnings of the family amounted to 73s. a week, and yet the children were allowed to receive food at the school. He thought that report showed that apparent destitution at the school was no real test of the condition of the home. He did not deny distress; he did not deny necessity, even urgent necessity, for relief in certain cases. But he did maintain that there was great risk of exaggeration where visitors judged from the mere aspect of the school and had not the time or leisure to go to the home and ascertain the actual circumstances and what the parents did for the children.

What was wanted as the result of the consideration of this question, was that if the parents neglected to provide meals for the children the Poor Law should intervene, but, if there was accidental distress, one would wish to see that remedied by voluntary effort organised by the local authority. They did not want a duplication or triplication of effort among the local authority, the Poor Law, and organised charity. His right hon. friend the President of the Local Government Board was about to issue to the guardians of Poor Law unions throughout the country an order to this effect, that upon application, either through managers or teachers empowered by managers or through an officer empowered by the local education authority, the guardians might relieve children who were not supplied with adequate food. This might be given by way of loan to the father recoverable as such relief was recoverable, and the relief would be given after notice to the father if the case was not urgent; if the case was urgent, relief would be given at once and notice would be served on the father afterwards.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE: Will that relief entail disenfranchisement of the parent?

Sir WILLIAM ANSON said, clearly. If a man did not feed his children, or was unable to feed them, and left that duty to be undertaken by the Poor Law authorities, he fell under the disability of the Poor Law.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: In the case of a loan?

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON said that was one form of relief, and the circular letter accompanying this order issued by the Local Government Board would call the attention of the guardians to the propriety of prosecuting parents for neglect, if, after the first period of relief had expired—a month—the children were still left without adequate nourishment. That was what the Local Government Board had undertaken to do, but the Board of Education would circulate the order, and the circular letter of the Local Government Board accompanying it, among the local education authorities, and at the same time, they should send a covering letter explaining the purport of the order and the circular, and they should invite the local authorities to distinguish between cases of permanent destitution, which were objects for the Poor Law in its ordinary course; cases of neglect which would be subject to the special order now issued by the Local Government Board; and cases of temporary or accidental loss of income arising from illness or want of employment, which should be properly dealt with by the charity, which was always available if properly organised by the local education authorities. They were further inviting local education authorities to organise inquiry by managers and teachers into the condition of the children at the schools and of the homes from which the children came, so that the relief, where necessary, should be given properly and where it was due.

He did not think that these measures brought them to the end of the difficulty. They did meet the case of children who came to school hungry. The hungry children would be fed either by organised charity or by the guardians if the parent neglected them; but there was a much larger class of cases not so easy to enumerate, and which he would endeavour to describe by reference to two documents—one the report of a sub-committee of the education committee of the London County Council after a visit to the Johanna Street Schools. They said that if any weight were to be attached to such summary investigations as those of Dr. Hutchinson, the natural conclusion would be that the supply of meals at school was not alone sufficient to build up a sound bodily frame for children poorly clothed, ill-nurtured, and badly housed, and, to come again to Miss Dendy's letter to the Manchester guardians, she said that nine-tenths of the irretrievable harm done to children was done by improper food before they were three years old. This state of things, she said, could not be cured by any wholesale methods of giving food by charity or by the State. How then were they to ascertain the nature and the extent of the evil which prevailed throughout the schools? It was not the result of the child's coming hungry to school day after day; it was not the result of the present lack of means; it was the result of bad clothing, bad housing, bad feeding from the time that the child was an infant. He hoped the Board of Education would shortly, as the result of a larger scheme for the employment of women inspectors, be able to publish a series of interesting reports by women inspectors who had inquired into the condition of infant schools.

But the root of the matter seemed to lie in medical inspection; and what they must first ask was, What were the existing powers of local authorities as to medical inspection and what was being done by them. The Departmental Committee was inquiring as to what was now being done, and with what result, by those local authorities which had undertaken medical inspection. Some hon. Members were, perhaps, not aware that local authorities might now appoint nurses and medical officers to inspect the children attending their schools. Every administrative county might appoint a medical officer, and every rural and urban sanitary district must have a medical officer; and it was worth considering how far the existing machinery could be utilised for this purpose before they introduced any such measure as to require local authorities to establish medical officers of their own in every school. Many hon. Members were made constantly and painfully aware of the heavy incidence of the rate for education under the Act of 1902, and the cost of medical inspection, which would be very heavy, was not at all easy to ascertain. In order to ascertain it inquiry must first be made as to what had happened among those local authorities—London, Bradford, and others—who employed medical officers. He thought they should have some notion of the liabilities that would be imposed by such a requirement, and he for one, should hesitate before he became responsible for the introduction of such an article in the Code as compulsory medical inspection, glad as he would be to see medical inspection carried out. As at present advised, the Board of Education was not likely to lay down any scheme of medical inspection of its own. He was sure it would be better for local authorities to devise their own scheme, knowing as they did that the character of it must differ very widely in different parts of the country.

As regarded the treatment of children, not merely hungry to-day, but ill-nurtured from infancy, the Inter-Departmental Committee would endeavour to ascertain whether voluntary effort organised by the local authorities could not work out a scheme without casting any special burden on the rates. There was no reason why local authorities who were so inclined should not devote certain of their schools to the education of children who were incapable of doing the ordinary work in a public elementary school, who required to spend less time at their books, and more in the work of their hands, who required more regularity in feeding, and to whom it would be a hardship to put them in competition with other children whose early days had been more happily and prosperously spent. The evidence, so far as he could gather, was that in London there must be something like 60,000 such children; but figures were very difficult to obtain. He hoped further information might be obtained from the Report of the Committee as to the possibility of meeting their needs without laying any special burden on the rates.

As to the future, the Board were endeavouring to organise teaching in regard to the ordinary habits of life which might induce the parent of the future to deal more sensibly with his children than the parents of the past had done. They were endeavouring to adapt the teaching of cookery to the circumstances of those who were taught. As regarded the teaching of the ordinary rules of health, the Board had had the assistance of the hon. Members for Rye and the University of London on the other side of the House, who had supplied them with a suitable scheme of teaching on these four topics—food and drink, cleanliness and fresh air. The scheme was a practical one, and he hoped that by inculcating proper knowledge in their elementary schools they should endeavour to provide against the malnutrition of the child of the future, though it would take some time to bring about.

He had endeavoured to point out to the House what were the sort of difficulties which this subject presented in the case of the child who came hungry to school, owing to the want or neglect of the parent, and of the child who came to school not hungry but incapable of taking in the teaching of the school owing to the conditions in which he had lived. He had endeavoured to describe the steps which the Local Government Board and the Board of Education were taking to remedy this, and he hoped that by careful organisation of the local education authorities, by voluntary effort, by the use of the Poor Law, by medical inspection, and by teaching to parents and children alike the laws of health, they might get rid of at least two aspects of the evil. He would rather trust to these remedies than take the heroic measures proposed. He knew that these steps would, to many Members, seem unsatisfactory and insufficient, and that, in looking to the future, they should be regarded as looking too far ahead, but he regarded this subject as of such great importance that he should be sorry to take any step which would imperil the future of the population of the country, and he believed that they should run some risk of weakening the character of the people if they adopted without consideration some short and easy mode of supplying the present need such as was indicated in this Resolution. The Government were inquiring into the facts and taking active steps in the direction suggested by the Physical Deterioration Committee. They were not prepared to take such a step as was indicated in this Resolution, because this Resolution, as he had pointed out, did not in itself contain the proposals of the Committee. He should prefer the Amendment of the hon. Member for North Islington to the Resolution as it stood, but he frankly said that, looking to the inquiries which he considered to be necessary in this matter, and to the importance of any step that they might take in this direction, and sympathising as he did with the spirit in which it was brought forward, although he should vote for the Amendment of his hon. friend he should vote against the Resolution as amended. The Government could not support it nor did he personally give it his support.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, N.): Will you make it a Party question?

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON: No, certainly not. This is a matter in which everyone must judge for themselves, but I hope I have said enough to show the importance which the Government attach to the question, and the reason why they cannot take the steps they are asked to take by the hon. Member.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston) said there were some disappointing and some very gratifying results of the debate. He thought it was marred at the commencement by an unjustified attack made by the hon. Member for Hoxton upon the front Opposition Benches, from which he said no help came. It was a remarkable commentary upon that attack that every one of the suggestions which had now been made by the head of the Department were made by himself from that very bench in the course of a speech two weeks back. The method of meeting this difficulty suggested by the Secretary to the Board of Education, as the scheme of the Government, was in the first instance brought forward by himself. They had taken the scheme without acknowledgment, and he was glad to point out that the whole of it came from that side of the House. While he congratulated the Government on having taken advice, he was sorry that they had not gone further in the direction of medical inspection, because that was, in his opinion, the basis of all progress in this matter. The temporising and timorous action of the Government ought to end, for it did little to meet a great and growing evil. Locally all authorities in an area should be brought into this work. The Education Act had retarded rather than helped the movement, for in many places medical inspection had been stopped. The central authority might not consider that the local education authority should undertake that work, but if they had co-operation and co-ordination of local authorities that duty and others could be easily performed. He could not congratulate the Government on having done anything bold in the matter. He thanked them for the little they had done, and hoped that at an early date they might receive fresh counsel and take a more vigorous and forward step.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 100; Noes, 64. (Division List No. 144.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allen, Charles P.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bell, Richard
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bingham, Lord
Blake, Edward
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Cust, Henry John C.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Ellice, Capt E C (SAndrw'sBghs
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fergusson, Rt.Hn.SirJ(Manch'r
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gladstone, Rt.Hn.HerbertJohn
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Gretton, John
Harcourt, Lewis
Hardie, J.Keir(MerthyrTydvil)
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Higham, John Sharp
Holland, Sir William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham
Hunt, Rowland
Jacoby, James Alfred
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea

Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
Kitson, Sir James
Lamont, Norman
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Macdona, John Cumming
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
Malcolm, Ian
Markham, Arthur Basil
Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow
Nolan, Joseph Louth (South)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Kelly, Conor, (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
Rea, Russell
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Ridley, S. Forde
Robson, William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Schwann, Charles E
Seely, Maj. J. E. B (Isle of Wight)
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick, B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R (Northants
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, JA (Glamorgan, Gower
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Ure, Alexander
Whiteley, George (York, W. R.
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, Henry J (York, W. R.
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Slack and Sir John Gorst.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, RtHnGerald W. (Leeds)
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A. (Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickson, Charles Scott
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Fellowes, Rt. Hn Ailwyn Edward
Finlay, Sir R. B (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Heath, Sir James (Staffords. NW
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred.
Keswick, William
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks NR
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants, Fareham
Legge, Col. Hn. Heneage
Long, Col. Charles W (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh, W
Majendie, James A. H.
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Morpeth, Viscount
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Purvis, Robert
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Shaw-Stewart, Sir H. (Renfrew)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir George Bartley and Sir Frederick Banbury.

Main Question again proposed.

And, it being after Midnight, and objection being taken to further Proceeding, Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER proceeded to interrupt the Business.

Whereupon Mr. SLACK rose in his place and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided:—Ayes, 93; Noes, 36. (Division List No. 145.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allen, Charles P.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bell, Richard
Blake, Edward
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Cust, Henry John C.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Ellice, Capt EC (St Andrews B'ghs
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)

Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Gretton, John
Harcourt, Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Higham, John Sharp
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hunt, Rowland
Jacoby, James Alfred
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Kitson, Sir James
Lamont, Norman
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
Lowther, C. (Cumb. Eskdale)
Macdona, John Cumming
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
Malcolm, Ian
Markham, Arthur Basil
Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
Rea, Russell
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Ridley, S. Forde
Robson, William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland
Schwann, Charles E.
Seely, Maj J. E. B. (Isle of Wight
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Rt Hn. C. R. (Northants
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, J A. (Glamorgan, Gower
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Slack and Mr. Claude Hay.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Bingham, Lord
Bond, Edward
Brassey, Albert
Chapman, Edward
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Davenport, William Bromley
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hobhouse, Rt Hn H. (Somers't, E
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Keswick, William
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Maconochie, A. W.
Majendie, James A. H.
Morpeth, Viscount
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Purvis, Robert
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Earl of Dalkeith and Sir William Tomlinson.

Whereupon Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER declared that the Question was not decided in the affirmative, because it was not supported by the majority prescribed by Standing Order 27, and that the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Wednesday, May 3rd.

WORKMEN'S TRAINS.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the working and administration of the Cheap Trains Act, 1883, and to report whether any, and, if so, what, amendments are reasonable and necessary to improve the service of Workmen's Trains in the Metropolis and elsewhere to secure the provision of the accommodation required by Workmen by all Railway Companies.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of, Mr. Bell, Colonel Bowles, Sir George Fardell, Mr. Fison, Mr. Galloway, Mr. Leverton Harris, Mr. Lough, Colonel Lockwood, Mr. Nannetti, Captain Norton, Mr. James O'Connor, Mr. Peel, Sir Harry Samuel, Mr. Ure, and Sir Thomas Wrightson.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

Adjourned at twenty-seven minutes after Twelve o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 19th April, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. SPEAKER, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Great Western Railway (Additional Powers) Bill; Halifax Corporation Bill; Stockport Corporation Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

PRIVATE BILLS, ETC.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 39, 128, and 230 be suspended, and that the time for depositing Petitions and Memorials against Private Bills, or against any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate, and for depositing duplicates of any Documents relating to any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate, also for depositing at the Private Bill Office all Documents relating to any Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the Recess.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill. "To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Brentford, Ealing, Hanwell, Heston and Isleworth, Sale, Sheffield, and Sunderland," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 188.]

PETITIONS.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Auchterarder; Bonnyrigg; Dalkeith; Darvel; Glasgow; Govan; Greenock; Perth; and Stevenston; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

Petition from Lee and other places, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RATES AND TAXES.

Petition from Norwood and Dulwich, for reduction; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EAST INDIA (APPEALS).

Return [presented 17th April] to be printed. [No. 134.]

TRADE (FOREIGN COUNTRIES AND BRITISH POSSESSIONS).

Copy presented, of Annual Statement of the Trade of the United Kingdom with Foreign Countries and British Possessions for 1904. Volume I. [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRANSVAAL.

Copy presented, of Papers relating to Constitutional Changes in the Transvaal [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRANSVAAL.

Copy presented, of Despatch transmitting Letters Patent and Order in Council providing for Constitutional Changes in the Transvaal [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC INCOME AND EXPENDITURE.

Account presented, of the Gross Public Income and Expenditure in the year ended 31st March, 1905, together with the Balances in the Exchequer at the commencement and at the termination of the year, and the amounts received into or issued from the Exchequer in respect of Funded and Unfunded Debt created or redeemed in the said year [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 135.]

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 12th April, 1905, granting to Matthew Henry Danily, Postmaster at Malpas, a Retired Allowance under the Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SOMALILAND PROTECTORATE.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated April 13th, 1905, as to audit of the Accounts of the Somaliland Protectorate [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW.

Copy presented, of Abstract of Accounts of the University of Glasgow for the year ending 30th September, 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 136.]

TREATY SERIES (No. 9, 1905).

Copy presented, of Convention between the United Kingdom and France respecting Commercial Relations between France and India. Signed at London, 19th February, 1903. Ratifications exchanged at London, 27th March, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TREATY SERIES (No. 10, 1905).

Copy presented, of Convention between the United Kingdom and France respecting Commercial Relations between France and the British Protectorates of East Africa, Central Africa, and Uganda. Signed at London, 23rd February, 1903. Ratifications exchanged at London, 27th March, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TREATY SERIES (No. 11, 1905).

Copy presented, of Convention between the United Kingdom and France respecting Commercial Relations between France and the Seychelles Islands. Signed at London, 16th April, 1902. Ratifications exchanged at London, 27th March, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TREATY SERIES (No. 12, 1905).

Copy presented, of Convention between the United Kingdom and France respecting Commercial Relations between France and Ceylon. Signed at London, 19th February, 1903. Ratifications exchanged at London, 27th March, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3342 to 3345 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION.

Copy ordered, "of Statistical Tables relating to Emigration and Immigration from and into the United Kingdom in the year 1904, and Report to the Board of Trade thereon."—(*Mr. Bonar Law.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 137.]

UNITED FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND AND THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND (LITIGATION) (ROYAL COMMISSION TO SIR JOHN CHEYNE).

Return ordered, "showing the number, nature, and result of the litigations instituted in the Courts of Scotland since the 1st day of August, 1904, by persons representing, or purporting to represent, the Free Church of Scotland against the United Free Church of Scotland, or persons purporting to represent it, under the following heads—

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.
Court in which brought, and date of commencement.	Nature of action or proceeding.	Pursuers or complainers.	Defenders or Respondents.	Nature of conclusion or prayer, *e.g.*, whether for interdict or declarator, or as the case may be.	Nature of property sought to be affected—Church manse, hall, or glebe, and parish and county where situated.	Nature of decisions given, and dates thereof, for example, interdict granted or declarator, or as the case may be.	Whether judgment now final or appealed, and present position of litigation.	Whether property before Sir John Cheyne, and what was his decision, and the date thereof.

—(*Mr. Black.*)

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (SCHOLARSHIPS, ETC.).

Return ordered, "showing the provision made by local education authorities for enabling Scholars of Public Elementary Schools to proceed to Secondary Schools or to pupil teacher centres and preparatory classes connected therewith by means of Exhibitions, Scholarships, Bursaries, payment of tuition fees, payment of travelling expenses, maintenance grants, etc., in the following form:—

Table A: Scholarships and Bursaries tenable by Scholars other than those who are pledged to become or who are Pupil Teachers.

	Number.		Age limits.	Conditions of Award.	Where tenable.	Number of years tenable.	Value during each year of tenure.
	Boys.	Girls.					
1. Scholarships -							
2. Bursaries - -							

"And, similar Return in respect of Table B: Scholarships and Bursaries tenable only by Scholars who are pledged to become Pupil Teachers."—(*Dr. Macnamara.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Sittings of Railway Commissioners.

Mr. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade if he will grant the Return showing the number of days in which the Railway Commissioners have sat (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 183, of Session 1902).

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The number of days upon which the Railway and Canal Commissioners have held sittings are as follows—

1896 . . .	38 days.
1897 . . .	47 ,,
1898 . . .	25 ,,
1899 . . .	44 ,,
1900 . . .	40 ,,
1901 . . .	41 ,,
1902 . . .	16 ,,
1903 . . .	31 ,,
1904 . . .	14 ,,

Note.—This Return does not include the days the Commissioners sat out of Court for purposes connected with the administrative duties of the Commission.

Oil Paintings in Committee Rooms of the House—Inscriptions and Repairs.

Sir MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): To ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, if his attention has been drawn to the absence of inscriptions on some of the oil paintings in the Committee Rooms and other parts of both Houses descriptive of the subjects depicted, and also to the state of repair in which some of them are; and whether he will devise means to supply the inscriptions and effect necessary repairs.

(*Answered by Lord Balcarres.*) The Answer to the first part of my hon. friend's Question is in the affirmative. The First Commissioner proposes to have inscriptions supplied; but the question of continuing the repair of the pictures, one of which has lately been restored, must await further consideration with regard to funds available.

Ballina (County Mayo) Postal Staff.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that there was a revision of the Ballina, county Mayo, postal staff in February, 1904, and that as a result six male sorting clerks and telegraphists were to be appointed; and whether, as the male staff for the past year has been undermanned, he will take steps to put the result of the revision into operation.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) A revision of the indoor staff at the Ballina office has been sanctioned and will be carried out as soon as the circumstances permit.

Allowances to Provincial Postmen for Indoor Duties.

MR. NOLAN (Louth, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General when he intends to announce the nature of the special allowances to be paid to selected postmen for performing certain indoor duties in the provinces, as promised to the deputation which waited upon him on the 26th January last.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) This matter is still under consideration; but I may at once state that it will not in any case be possible to introduce the scheme otherwise than gradually.

Postmen's Good Conduct Stripes.

MR. NOLAN: To ask the Postmaster-General if he intends to introduce any modifications into the regulations which govern the award, arrestment, or forfeiture of good-conduct stripes for postmen.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I have no present intention of doing so.

Revision of Glasgow Postal Staff.

MR. NOLAN: To ask the Postmaster-General if, in the proposed revision of the indoor force at Glasgow, which has been pending for some years, provision will be made for the 25 per cent. additional overseerships promised in his recently-issued Memorandum in addition to the clerkships already promised; and also when the revision is likely to come into force.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) A revision of the rank and file at Glasgow was carried out in the early part of last year, and a further general revision is not contemplated. I am considering the question of increasing the number of overseers, and I will announce my decision in due course, but I must point out that I have not made any promise of an addition of 25 per cent.

Case of Telegraphist Booth.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that a telegraphist named Booth, employed at the Central Telegraph Office, was discharged from the service on Friday, April 14th, in consequence of having contracted telegraph cramp in the wrist; that he had previously asked unsuccessfully that he should be transferred to the sorting department, being willing to forego seniority; and that, after the appearance of a Question upon the Notice Paper in connection with the proceedings of this House asking for information upon the subject, the telegraphist was sent for and told to resume duty on Monday, 17th; and whether he will state whether it is his intention to retain Booth in the service, and utilise his services in the sorting office.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) Instructions for Booth's retention in the service, pending the further consideration of his application for transfer, were given on the 10th instant, that is, some days before a Question on the subject appeared on the Notice Paper. The insinuation of the hon. Member is therefore quite unfounded. As I informed the hon. Member on the 17th instant†, the case is now under consideration, and I hope soon to be able to give a decision.

Examination for Clerkship in the Dublin Quit Rent Office.

MR. T. M. HEALY: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if his attention has been called to the regulations of the Civil Service Commissioners, dated March

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† See page 291.

21st, 1905, for an examination for a second-class clerk having three years experience in a solicitor's office, who will be required to serve in the first instance in the Quit Rent Office, Dublin; and if he would state why any examination for such a post should take place in London, seeing that Irish legal experience would appear to be essential.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) I understand that the examination referred to in the hon. and learned Member's Question will be held both in London and in Dublin.

Attendance in the "Parliamentary Debates" Office.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that the office of the *Parliamentary Debates* in this House is very frequently left without an attendant to give information or to provide Members with copies of the *Debates* they may wish to purchase; and whether he will take steps to secure a constant attendance at this office during reasonable hours while the House is sitting.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) I understand that steps have been taken to secure a constant attendance in the future as desired by the hon. Member.

Purchase of Irish Farms under the Land Act—Stamp Duties.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY Cavan, W.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that tenant purchasers, under The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1903, are prejudiced in the subsequent sale of their farms, in so much as the stamp duty payable on registering the transfer by the transferee is 200 per cent. more than if the same farm were sold as a tenancy from year to year; and, if so, will the Government introduce legislation to deal with the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) It is assumed that the hon. Member is referring to the stamp duty payable on a conveyance on sale. This duty is chargeable, by reference to Section 57 of the Stamp Act, 1891, not only on the money consideration paid by the transferee, but also on the outstanding portion of any advance made to the purchasing tenant. This provision of the law is of general application and is not peculiar to Ireland, and I do not consider that any alteration in the law is desirable.

Irish Drainage Schemes.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if, in view of the fact that county councils in Ireland are anxious to carry out the wishes of the ratepayers in initiating drainage schemes, an Order in Council giving the necessary powers will be issued, or, in the alternative, will the Government introduce legislation to deal with this matter at once.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) Legislation would be required to give county councils the necessary powers for such schemes as the hon. Member refers to. I am not in a position to introduce a measure for this purpose.

Issue of British Pilotage Certificates to Foreigners.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether the Board of Trade have recently granted pilotage certificates for the Bristol pilotage district to the masters of two Dutch vessels; whether the Dutch Government do not permit the issue of pilotage certificates to English masters or mates; and, if so, whether a representation will be made to the Dutch Government to grant the same treatment to British masters of vessels as the British Government grant to Dutch masters.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) The Board of Trade recently examined the masters of two Dutch vessels, but they only granted a pilotage certificate to one of them, the other not being found properly qualified. The Netherlands Government do not grant such certificates to the masters or mates of any vessels, whether Dutch or British; and it would accordingly be useless for His Majesty's Government to make the suggested representation.

Boys in Royal Naval Reserve—Allowances.

Mr. CHARLES McARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he will state the number of boys enrolled in the Royal Naval Reserve and the allowances made in respect of them for each year during which the scheme of 1898 was in force.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) In the year 1899–1900 the number of boys enrolled was 302, and the payments made were £672 14s. 7d. In 1900–1 the number of boys enrolled was 454, and the payments made were £1,647 3s. 9d. In 1901–2 the number of boys enrolled was 691, and the payments made were £2,861 9s. 11d. In 1902–3 the number of boys enrolled was 783, and the payments made were £3,938 8s. 8d. In 1903–4 the number of boys enrolled was 1,065, and the payments made were £4,533 19s. 3d. In 1904–5 the number of boys enrolled was 1,121, but the figures showing the amounts paid are not yet available.

Punishment of Crews for refusing to sail in British Steamers carrying Contraband of War.

Mr. ROBSON (South Shields): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he is aware that thirty-six seamen of the crews of the British steamships "St. Helena" and "Battersea Bridge" have been sentenced to three weeks imprisonment at Hong-Kong for refusing to proceed to Japan with contraband of war; and whether, having regard to the terms of His Majesty's proclamation of neutrality, he will take steps to procure the immediate release of these men.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) In answer to the Question addressed to the Secretary to the Board of Trade, His Majesty's Government have no knowledge of the matter, but will telegraph to the Governor of Hong-Kong for particulars.

Scottish General Aid Grant.

Mr. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid.): To ask the Lord-Advocate if he can give the total amount of the payments made for the year ending March 31st last under each of the different heads and sub-heads of the Minute of April 25th, 1904, which provides for the distribution of the General Aid Grant; also the amount at the same date standing at the credit of the Suspense Account.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) The total amounts paid for the year ended March 31st, 1905, under the Minute of April 25th, 1904 were—

	£
Under Head I. (a) . .	11,755
Under Head I. (b) . .	3,600
Under Head I. (c) . .	1,430
Total under Head I. .	£16,785

Under Head II. £98,344 13s. 6d.

The amount at the credit of the Suspense Account on 31st March, 1905, was £111,530 1s. There are 107 schools yet to be paid under the Minute. I estimate that the grant for these will amount to—

	£
Under Head I. . . .	500
Under Head II. . . .	5,250
Total .	£5,750

German Tariff Concessions to British Goods.

Sir ALFRED HICKMAN (Wolverhampton, W.): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will say what concessions (if any) have been made by the German Government upon their general tariff in compliance with the representations submitted to them by the British Foreign Office; and what number of concessions have been made on articles or goods which are not imported from this country.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) The Report of the Commercial Intelligence Committee, showing the articles in respect of which representations were made by His Majesty's Government, will be found in the Parliamentary Return [Cd. 2044]. Another Return [Cd. 2414] has recently been issued by the Board of Trade showing the modifications introduced into the new German tariff as the result of negotiations between Germany and various other Continental countries. It is impossible to say to what extent the German Government, in agreeing to the modifications stated in the Return, may have been also influenced by the representations made by His Majesty's Government.

Commercial Relations with China.

Sir GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has any official information showing that the terms of the Mackay Treaty made in pursuance of Article 11 of the Peking Protocol of September, 1901, to facilitate commercial relations between China and foreign countries, have in effect been ignored by China; that the rights referred to have been violated by provincial officials who have levied *likin* on goods covered by transit passes; have forcibly seized cargo at the barriers; and have illegally interfered with agents and employees of British merchants; that in contravention of the Mackay Treaty heavier duties are levied upon foreign-owned cotton mills than on native mills in the country; that, in contravention of Article 2 of the treaty which provided for the introduction of a national uniform coinage, the provincial authorities continue to mint new copper currency; and that the reform in mining regulations arranged for in Article 9 of the treaty have remained unfulfilled; and, if so, whether the Government intend taking action in concert with other Powers to secure the fulfilment of the obligations into which China entered in 1901.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) No information of the acts alleged in the Question has reached us. Such acts would be violations not of the Treaty of 1902, but of treaties concluded with China at an earlier date. His Majesty's Minister at Peking has been informed in reply to his inquiries as to the steps which had been taken to carry out the provisions of Article II. of the Treaty of 1902 that the Office of Financial Administration has presented a memorial to the Throne proposing the establishment of a general mint at Tientsin for the coinage of silver and copper and the introduction of a uniform national coinage. As soon as definite arrangements have been made they will be communicated to Sir E. Satow. With regard to the mining regulations the Chinese Government state that regulations have been drawn up, but that it is necessary to consult the provincial authorities before the final arrangements could be settled.

Accidents caused by Horse and Motor Traffic in the Metropolis.

Mr. SCOTT MONTAGU (Hampshire, New Forest): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will state the number and nature of accidents known to the Metropolitan Police to have been caused in the Metropolitan Police district in the year 1904 by horses, horse-drawn vehicles (other than tramcars), tramcars, motor-cars, and motor-cycles.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) The following table gives the information which the hon. Member desires—

Cause of accident. (I.)	Total number of accidents to persons or property. (II.)	Number of accidents to property. (III.)	Number of accidents to persons. (IV.)	Total number of persons injured in the accidents shown in Column IV. (V.)	Nature of accidents enumerated in column.		
					Number slight. (VI.)	Number serious. (VII.)	Number fatal. (VIII.)
Horses - - -	641	444	193	209	181	28	—
Horse-drawn vehicles (excluding tramcars) -	21,771	16,834	5,798	5,989	5,193	676	120
Tramcars (horse drawn) - -	1,287	1,060	246	260	222	35	3
Tramcars (mechanically propelled) - -	2,292	1,785	528	539	470	65	4
Omnibuses (mechanically propelled) - -	30	12	19	22	18	2	2
Motor-cars -	1,775	1,395	426	458	367	78	13
Motor cycles -	274	151	153	164	146	14	4
Total -	28,070	21,681	7,363	7,641	6,597	898	146

Direct and Indirect Taxation.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will state, divided into the two general categories of direct taxation and indirect taxation, the several heads of the tax revenue, excluding the export duty on coal, together with the amount estimated to be received under each head in the year 1905–6; and the totals receivable as direct taxation and as indirect taxation in that year.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The estimated receipts in 1905–6, under the heads of taxation classed as direct and indirect, are as follows, excluding the export duty on coal, and including the local taxation revenues—

Indirect.	£	Direct.	£
Customs - - - -	32,226,000	Excise :—	
Excise :—		Licences and Railway Duty	4,667,000
Beer Duty - -	12,919,000	Estate Duties - - -	17,289,000
Spirit Duty - - -	17,812,000	Stamps - - -	8,000,000
Glucose, etc. - -	93,000	Land Tax and House Duty	2,700,000
		Income-Tax - - -	31,000,000
Total Indirect - -	£63,050,000	Total Direct - -	£63,656,000

Grants to Reinstated Tenants on the Kingston Estate.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork County, N.E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state when the Estates Commissioners will inquire into the circumstances of the tenants on the Kingston property who have been restored to their former holdings by the vendor, and have made applications to the Commissioners for money grants to assist them in the building and stocking of the farms, and thus help the reinstated tenants to a fair start.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) It is not at present possible to state when this estate will be inspected, as the originating application has only recently been lodged. The Commissioners will have inquiry made as soon as possible as to the making of grants to the tenants who have been reinstated by the owner.

Waveney School, Ballymena.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that of the ninety-one infants on the roll of Waveney Applicant School, Ballymena, in December last, thirty-three were never at school before, thirty-five were withdrawn from an overcrowded school, Guy's Infants (accommodation for 155—average attendance for year, with Waveney School in operation, 156), and a number came from other schools outside Ballymena; and will he explain, in view of the fact that the Commissioners of National Education have given a grant to the new Cloncore School, where the average attendance for quarter ending 31st March was fifty-seven, and fifty-six of the pupils in attendance were withdrawn from other schools in which more than sufficient accommodation already existed, on what grounds the grant is withheld from Waveney School.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The number of pupils enrolled as infants in the Waveney School on the occasion of the chief inspector's visit in December last was seventy-seven. Of these thirty-three had not previously been at school. Thirty-five pupils on rolls had been withdrawn from Guy's Infants School; but if the parents and guardians of these pupils were dissatisfied with the accommodation afforded in that school ample accommodation could have been found in existing national schools. The reasons which influenced the Commissioners in declining to grant aid to the Waveney School were stated in reply to the hon. Member's Question of the 3rd instant†.

Guy's Schools, Ballymena.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Guy's Free Schools, Ballymena, were founded and endowed by the late John Guy for the education of the youth of the poor of the town; that a scheme has been framed under the Educational Endowments (Ireland) Act, 1885, for the government and management of Guy's Educational Endowments; that a grant has been provisionally sanctioned towards the rebuilding and extension of these schools; and that a memorial signed by Ballymena residents protesting against the division of the endowments proposed in the scheme, and the removal of the schools from their present site, and asking an inquiry into the circumstances of the case, has been received by the Commissioners of Education; and, if so, will he state whether it is intended, before any further steps are taken, to grant the inquiry asked for in the memorial.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The facts are as stated. The Commissioners of Education in Ireland, however, are not concerned in the control of the endowment. The scheme referred to empowers the governing body to remove the school to another site with the sanction of the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests.

Salaries in the Veterinary Branch of the Irish Department of Agriculture.

MR. O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will explain the causes of the disparity in the salaries of officials engaged in the same class of work in the veterinary branch of the Department of Agriculture in Ireland.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxliv., 133.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I beg to refer to the Answer given to the Question put by the hon. Member for the Ossory Division of Queen's County on the 6th March last.†

Treatment of Catholic Officials in the Veterinary Branch of the Irish Department of Agriculture.

Mr. O'KELLY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any action has so far been taken on the representations of Irish public bodies in connection with the treatment of Catholic officials in the veterinary banch of the Department of Agriculture; and, if not, whether it is proposed to take any action.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I beg to refer to the Answer given to the Question put by the hon. Member for the Ossory Division of Queen's County on the 9th March last.‡

Militia Training.

Dr. THOMPSON (Monaghan, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for War when and to what extent he proposes to increase the training period of Militia regiments.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) No decision has yet been arrived at by the Army Council on this subject.

4th West York Artillery Volunteers.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he is aware that for many years the 4th West York Artillery Volunteers have been encouraged to prepare themselves for field artillery, and that, in pursuance of this aim, they have gone to trouble and expense in riding drill, in the purchase of horses and equipment, and the erection of a riding school, and that an instalment of field guns has been furnished them; and will he explain why a decision has been arrived at that they must revert to garrison artillery; and if, having regard to the dissatisfaction produced in the West Riding by this decision, the matter can be reconsidered.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The Army Council do not consider that, in view of the great increase in the Royal Artillery, Volunteer field artillery are required for defence purposes, but that Volunteer heavy artillery may render valuable services. Some field guns were lent to the corps referred to by my hon. and gallant friend because at the time no heavy guns were available. It was not, however, contemplated that the corps should be permanently maintained as field artillery. To do so would involve expenditure in excess of funds available from public sources. I understand that private funds are not adequate to make up the deficiency, and, under the circumstances, the Army Council, though recognising the excellent work done by the corps, are of opinion that the original intention should now be carried out and that the corps should cease to train as field artillery.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Army Promotions.

Mr. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the officers recently promoted from the rank of major-general to that of lieutenant-general were nominated by the Selection Board, or whether they were selected by him, under a method of procedure contained in a War Office decision of October last; and, if so, whether he will publish, for the information of the House, the War Office decision in question.

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.): Selections for the higher Army commands, including promotions to the rank of lieutenant-general, are made by the Secretary of State from a list of officers whose professional qualifications render them, in the opinion of the Selection Board, eligible for such appointments. Selections were recently made and promotions carried out in accordance with the practice which I have indicated.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxlii., 420.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cxlii., 934.

Lord Curzon's University Legislation.

Dr. SHIPMAN (Northampton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the agitation in India caused by Lord Curzon's University legislation and other recent enactments, he will take steps to remove the causes of this dissatisfaction.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl Percy, Kensington, S.) (for Mr. Brodrick): I see no reason to take any such action as is suggested by the hon. Member with regard to the recent legislation of the Indian Government.

The Mullah.

Mr. LEIF JONES (Westmoreland, Appleby): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can inform the House what are the terms of the treaty which has been concluded with the Mullah.

Earl PERCY: No, Sir; I understand that the Colonial Office has not yet received a reply from General Swayne.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): When does the noble Lord expect to get a reply? It is more than a month since the arrangement was made.

Earl PERCY: I am afraid at the present moment the only explanation I can give of the delay is that General Swayne is engaged in an expedition into the interior. In any case some time must elapse before a telegram can reach us.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): Has the noble Lord seen what purports to be the agreement between the Mullah and Italy, which has been published in Italy?

Earl PERCY: I have seen the terms of the Italian treaty with the Mullah, but we are not aware whether the terms of the English treaty are the same.

Dartmoor Prison.

Mr. SPEAR (Devonshire, Tavistock): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he is aware of the insufficiency of house accommodation for warders at His Majesty's Prison at Princetown; and if he proposes to take steps to supply such deficiency by erecting more dwellings.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's): £1,500 has been taken in this year's Estimates for providing additional warders' quarters at Dartmoor Prison. The work will be commenced as soon as possible, and it is expected that the money will provide quarters for either seven or eight of the officers who now have to lodge in Princetown. When this addition has been made 192 or 193 out of a total staff of 228 at Dartmoor will be in occupation of Government quarters.

Foreign Prisoners and Prison Rules.

Mr. H. D. GREENE (Shrewsbury): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether in prisons of detention, or in local prisons, or in convict establishments, the rules, regulations, and notices affecting prisoners are explained, published, or exhibited to foreign prisoners in foreign languages or in any and in what languages besides the English language; and what arrangements are made so that prisoners who do not understand English shall understand them and the orders given to such prisoners; and whether prisoners are punished for disobedience to rules published only in a language they cannot translate or comprehend.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: The prison rules and regulations are printed in French, German, and Italian in all prisons. In the case of a prisoner unacquainted with English, and speaking a language other than those named, it would be the duty of the Governor to take steps to make him acquainted with the regulations. I have no reason to believe that this rule is not strictly observed by all Governors. It is not the practice to punish prisoners for the breach of rules they do not understand. The hon. Member may have in mind the case of a prisoner of Greek nationality which has been recently mentioned in some newspapers. I have ascertained that this prisoner can speak and understand English, and has claimed to be English on the ground that he has lived for five years in England.

Promotion Regulations in the Post Office.

MR. NOLAN (Louth, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if there exists any Treasury Minute or Regulation which prevents the ante-dating of promotions to the dates of the vacancies where long delay occurs in the filling up of such vacancies

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): There is no such Minute or Regulation that I am aware of. The general rule of the Post Office is that promotions shall take effect on and from the date on which they receive the Postmaster-General's approval. Every effort is made to fill vacancies as soon as possible.

London Rates.

MR. BENN (Devonport): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board how the increase in the average rate in the pound levied by the Metropolitan boroughs up to 1905 compares with the increase in the average rate, exclusive of education, levied by the London County Council during the same period.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): I gave the hon. Member figures based on the returns made to the Local Government Board for the three years ended March, 1904, in my reply to his Question on Monday.† I am sorry to say that I cannot yet give him similar figures up to March, 1905. The hon. Member was good enough to furnish me with some figures up to the latter date, but I have not at present the material which would enable me to check these.

The Unemployed Bill.

MR. BENN: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the new rate under the Unemployed Bill will be levied by the borough councils or by the London County Council.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: There will be no separate rate levied for London for the purposes of the Unemployed Bill. The contribution to the central body by each Metropolitan borough will be paid out of the general rate, and in the case of the City it will be paid by the Common Council out of the consolidated rate.

MR. BENN: The rate will be collected by the borough councils?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Yes, Sir.

Port Tyne Sanitary Authority.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware of the opposition of the ratepayers of Whitley Bay and Monkseaton to the proposal to include these districts within the area of the Port Tyne Sanitary Authority; and whether, in view of the fact that the Urban District Council of Whitley and Monkseaton have already spent large sums of money on sanitation, to provide and equip ample hospital accommodation in order to protect the health of the people, he will take care to protect the inhabitants of these districts from being included in the Port Sanitary area and thereby exposed to the risk of heavier financial burdens.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am aware of the proposal that the Whitley and Monkseaton Urban District should be included within the limits of jurisdiction of the River Tyne Port Sanitary Authority, and of the opposition to that proposal. A local inquiry on the subject has recently been held by an inspector of the Local Government Board. Upon receipt of his report I will give full consideration to the case before arriving at a decision with regard to it.

Condemned Non-Provided London Schools.

MR. BENN: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, as the non-provided schools in London are not rated, and the Council's provided schools are rated, he can state approximately the extra cost which will fall upon the ratepayers if the ninety-two recently condemned non-provided schools are replaced by provided schools.

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† See page 308.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I am not in a position to give an estimate of the kind desired by the hon. Member.

Mr. BENN: But is it not the fact that if provided schools are to be substituted for non-provided schools it will mean a considerable addition to the rates?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: That is a Question which surely the hon. Gentleman can answer for himself.

Brussels Permanent Sugar Commission.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether the sittings of the Permanent Commission at Brussels have now terminated; whether the sugar legislation of any other countries has been condemned; and whether His Majesty's Government have resolved to take any action in pursuance of the decisions of the Convention.

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Bonar Law, Glasgow, Blackfriars): The sittings of the Permanent Sugar Commission have terminated: no countervailing duties have been fixed with respect to any additional countries; no action on the part of His Majesty's Government is therefore requisite.

Imports of Russian and Argentine Sugars.

Mr. LOUGH: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether, at the recent sittings of the Brussels Sugar Convention, the case of Russia has been further considered; whether any decision has yet been arrived at with regard to the amount of countervailing duties that should be charged by countries adopting that procedure on Russian sugar; and whether His Majesty's Government can see their way to withdraw the prohibition now existing against the importation of sugar from Russia and Argentina into this country.

Mr. BONAR LAW: I am informed that the question of Russian sugar was not considered at the recent meeting of the Permanent Sugar Commission. The Answer to the last part of the Question is in the negative.

Mr. LOUGH asked whether, if the case of Russia had not been considered and countervailing duties fixed, the hon. Gentleman did not think that the Government was at liberty to remove prohibition in the case of Russia.

Mr. BONAR LAW: We do not think so.

Lightships and Wireless Telegraphy.

Major SEELY (Isle of Wight): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade if he can now state when the installation of wireless telegraphic apparatus on the six lightships for life-saving purposes is to be completed.

Mr. BONAR LAW: I can only say that progress is being made with the work.

Cost of Elementary Education in England and Wales.

Dr. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether he can state for the year 1903–4 the amount of money per head of the children in average attendance in the public elementary schools of England and Wales contributed from the Imperial Exchequer and from local rates respectively on account of educational maintenance, the amount per child in average attendance spent on teachers' salaries, and the amount per child in average attendance spent on books and apparatus.

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the BOARD of EDUCATION (Sir William Anson, Oxford University): The amount of grant provided in the Estimates for 1903–4 for public elementary schools, *i.e.*, the annual grant, fee grant, and aid grant, amounted to £1 18s. 3¾d. per child in average attendance. Owing to the year 1903–4 having been a period of transition, the Board have not found it possible to collect any figures from which any accurate or reliable estimate can be deduced of the sum per child in average attendance contributed from local rates. The Board have no information as to the total amount expended on teachers' salaries during the period; the amount expended on the salaries of certificated teachers was about £1 10s. per child in average attendance. The Board have no information as to the amount expended on "books and apparatus."

Cost of Education in London.

MR. BENN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education if he will state the amount of the additional expense incurred to date in the administration of the London Education Act, 1903, both as regards total amount and cost per child; and whether he can at present give any estimate of the total additional cost which that measure involves to the Metropolis.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON: The Board have at present no figures as to the expenditure of the London County Council under the London Education Act, 1903. Under the circumstances it is not possible for me to give any information on the subject.

DR. MACNAMARA: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that the replacement of the voluntary schools to be condemned will mean a 4d. rate on the London ratepayers?

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON: I do not see how that arises out of the Question.

Shaw British School.

MR. EMMOTT (Oldham): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether his attention has been called to the case of the Shaw British School, a school containing over 500 scholars in average attendance, which has always been carried on without sectarian teaching or test, and is the only unsectarian school in a district containing six schools; whether he is aware that the Lancashire Education Committee were on the point of purchasing the school for a council school when, without notice to the education committee, the building was privately purchased by an anonymous person, who intends to make it a Church of England school; and whether, in such a case, any of the inhabitants of the district besides the purchaser have any voice in the character of the religious education to be given in the school in future.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON: I understand that the school, though it has been called British, is privately owned, and has never been associated by trust with the British Society. I further gather that up to the present time no deed has been executed making the school a Church of England school, and that the religious instruction continues to be under the control of exactly the same body of managers as before, except that the Vicar has been co-opted in place of one of the former managers, who retired. The character of the religious instruction remains in the hands of the managers.

MR. EMMOTT: Cannot the hon. Gentleman answer the latter part of my Question?

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON: If the hon. Member refers to Sections 8 and 9 of the Education Act and the notices there mentioned, I understand such notice is not required where a change of this character is made in the case of a voluntary school.

Cost of Education in Scotland.

DR. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the Lord-Advocate whether he can state, for the year 1903–4, the amount of money per head of the children in the public elementary schools of Scotland contributed from the Imperial Exchequer and from local rates respectively on account of educational maintenance; the amount per child in average attendance spent on teachers' salaries; and the amount per child in average attendance spent on books and apparatus.

THE LORD-ADVOCATE (Mr. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgton): It is difficult to answer the Question as put by the hon. Member as the term "public elementary school" is, so far as Scotland is concerned, only defined in the Elementary School Teachers Superannuation Act, 1898, as being "a public or other school in receipt of annual Parliamentary grant." The term, therefore, includes all schools which receive grants under the Code, whether school board schools or voluntary schools, and irrespective of whether they give elementary or higher grade education. On this footing I am informed the figures are as follows:—For the year 1903–4, the income per scholar in average attendance in all schools receiving grants under the Code from the Imperial Exchequer was £1 15s. 7d. In such schools under school boards the income per scholar from rates was 19s. 11¾d., but a sum amounting to 4s. 7d. per scholar was also received from local sources, other than rates; while in voluntary schools receiving grants a sum amounting to 13s. 10d. per scholar was received from local sources. The expenditure per scholar on teachers' salaries was £2 5s. 8¾d., and on books and apparatus, 2s. 5¼d.

Cost of Education in Ireland.

Dr. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state for the year 1903–4 the amount of money per head of the children in national schools in Ireland contributed from the Imperial Exchequer and local rates respectively on account of educational maintenance; the amount per child in average attendance spent on teachers' salaries; and the amount per child in average attendance spent on books and apparatus.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.): The rate contributed per head of the children in average attendance from State grants for the year 1903–4 was £2 11s. 9d. The similar rate from local sources was 4s. 5½d. The average payment per pupil in average daily attendance in respect of teachers' salaries was £2 8s. 11d. A precise Answer to the last inquiry cannot be given. Books are largely purchased from local vendors and paid for by the pupils. The Board, however, made free grants of books and requisites to the amount of £531 in some exceptional cases; and they made grants of equipment for manual and technical instruction to the value of £10,300.

Arnott Estate, County Cork.

*Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a report of a meeting of tenants on the Arnott Estate, county Cork, at which the Rev. T. Shinkwin, P.P., announced, on the authority of a Roman Catholic Bishop, that the Estates Commissioners had decided not to divide the estate of Sir John Arnott for purposes of sale under the Land Act, but to insist upon the estate being sold as a whole; whether he is aware that the tenants of about sixty holdings on this estate, all adjacent to one another and of a total area of 5,000 acres, have entered into purchase agreements, and that an application is pending to have this portion of the property declared a separate estate; and will he say whether the Estates Commissioners have already come to a decision in the matter.

Mr. WALTER LONG: No proceedings for the sale of this estate have come before the Commissioners. They can give no decision in the matter until the facts are fully before them.

*Mr. LONSDALE: Is it competent for two Commissioners to give a decision in the absence of the third on matters of this kind.

Mr. WALTER LONG replied that he assumed that in ordinary cases the decision of the majority of the Commissioners, two out of three, would be operative, but he could not undertake to decide questions of law.

Drummond Estate, County Kerry.

Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that negotiations for the sale of the Drummond Estate, near Beaufort, county Kerry, have been completed, and that the sale is to be carried out through the Congested Districts Board; can he state in what way the tenants can benefit from Section 44 of the Land Act of 1903; and whether the Board will give a reduction of 10 per cent. when effecting the sale, or will improve the holdings to that extent, or will give it in the form of a reduction to the tenants on the purchase instalments.

MR. WALTER LONG: Neither the Board nor the Estates Commissioners have any information as to this estate. The section quoted applies to purchases of congested estates by the Estates Commissioners.

Horse Breeding at Cahirciveen.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that representations have been made to the Department of Agriculture by Mr. J. B. Fitzgerald, of Cahirciveen, as to the unsuitability of sending a thoroughbred sire to that district instead of a hunter sire, which would be more suitable; whether he is aware that fifteen or twenty years ago there was a strain of horses in that locality which always commanded good prices; and can he state on whose advice the thoroughbred sire has now been sent to Cahirciveen.

MR. WALTER LONG: Yes, Sir, such representations have been made. The Department have no information as to the second inquiry. The thoroughbred sire mentioned was sent on the advice of the Department's officers.

Portaferry (County Down) School.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Secretary to the Portaferry (county Down) School Attendance Committee is an assistant in the Roman Catholic school, and that, when the Commissioners of National Education had their attention drawn to the matter, they wrote to the managers of the school that this gentleman could not hold the position of secretary while a teacher; and whether, seeing that this gentleman continues to hold the position in defiance of the Commissioners, he will state what steps the Department intends to take in the matter.

MR. WALTER LONG: In June, 1904, the Commissioners informed the committee that it was not permissible, under the Board's rules, for the assistant teacher to act as secretary to the committee. The Commissioners were not aware that he continues to act in this capacity, and are now making further inquiries into the matter.

Royal Irish Constabulary—Galway Free Force.

MR. O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the strength at which it was decided to maintain the Royal Irish Constabulary free force in the county of Galway at the triennial redistributions in 1900 and 1903, the date of the triennial revision in each of those years, the number of police actually engaged in the county twelve months after the last revision, the number of extra police now employed, how many of this number have been drafted in from the depôt and how many from other counties, by what number would the Galway free force establishment be exceeded by taking into account only the police drafted from the depot omitting the number drafted in from the free force quota of other counties; and whether the vacancies caused in the free force in other counties have been made good by drafts from the depot.

MR. WALTER LONG: The free force fixed in May, 1900, was:—For Galway, E.R., 311 men; for Galway, W.R., 349 men. No change was made at the redistribution in May, 1903. The actual numbers serving in May, 1904, were: In Galway, E.R., 288 men; in Galway, W.R., 321 men. The numbers of extra police now employed are: 70 in the East Riding, and 50 in the West Riding. The whole of this extra force has been drafted in from other counties, and the vacancies so caused have not been made good by drafts from the depot.

Mayo Marine Works.

MR. O'KELLY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if any reply has been received from the Midland Great Western Railway Company in connection with the Mayo schemes under the Marine Works Act of 1902.

Mr. WALTER LONG: No reply has yet been received.

County Kerry Railway Guarantees.

Mr. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he proposes to take any steps to relieve the ratepayers in the county of Kerry from the payment of certain railway and other guarantees in accordance with the promise of the right hon. Member for Dover.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Development Grant Estimate for the current year contains provision for payment of a first instalment of a grant, estimated at £23,500, towards the reconstruction and improvement of the line of railway from Tralee to Dingle. No further steps are in contemplation by the Government.

London Voluntary Schools.

Dr. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to a special report on the 438 London voluntary schools submitted to the London County Council yesterday, in the course of which 92 of these schools have been condemned outright and 314 reported upon as unsatisfactory in the matter of drainage; whether he is aware that the estimated result of this report is that 50,000 new school places will have to be provided at a cost of at least £1,500,000, that in the event of denominational trustees being unable to supply these places the same will have to be furnished by the London ratepayers, and that the maintenance charge upon the London County Council in any event will henceforward be on account of these schools over £500,000 annually; and whether, in view of these facts, he will undertake to propose during the present session of Parliament such amendment of the Education Acts of 1902 and 1903 as shall give the London County Council, together with the borough councils, the right to nominate as their representatives a larger number than two managers out of each six of the managers who constitute the committee of management of each of these schools.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): In answer to the hon. Gentleman, I have to say that I have not seen the report, and I understand it is not available for general use at present. I am told, however, that the estimates are for the most part very conjectural, and err, if they do err, very much on the side of excess. As regards the conclusion which the hon. Gentleman attempts to draw from the facts he states on the Paper, I cannot agree with it. It seems to me that recent events have conclusively shown two things—in the first place, that the local authority has complete control over all the schools in its district as far as these matters are concerned; and, in the second place, that the voluntary schools are an enormous saving to the ratepayers.

Dr. MACNAMARA: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, in view of the great expenditure on the schools, he will give the County Council and the borough councils the right to nominate as their representatives in control of a school a larger number than two managers out of six.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not follow the argument of the hon. Gentleman. It seems to me that what has happened shows that the control is adequate as it is, and I see no reason to alter it.

India and the Colonial Conference.

Mr. LOUGH: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been drawn to the assurance given by Lord Curzon to the Viceroy's Legislative Council at Calcutta, that if the Government of India were invited to enter a conference instructions would be given to her delegates that they must reserve full liberty for India to trade with the whole world on such terms as would suit her best, unfettered by engagements with other countries; and whether, having regard to his pledge that nothing would be done by this Parliament to alter existing free trade institutions, he will undertake that if any invitations are issued to a Colonial Conference the British representatives shall reserve the same liberty for the United Kingdom.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The statement is erroneous, and the speech which is quoted in the Question was not made by Lord Curzon, but by an unofficial member of the Council.

Mr. LOUGH: But in any event will the First Lord do nothing to protect the interests of this country in a free-trade direction?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman knows perfectly well that I have said over and over again that in my opinion the conference should be free as regards all the interests concerned.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what business will be taken after the holidays? I presume there is no serious intention of taking the Second Reading of the Aliens Bill on the first day on which we meet. I may point out that although there is a considerable interval between the two dates it is not a Parliamentary interval, and Members will have no opportunity of consulting one another? Also what Supply will be taken on Thursday?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I thought I had already announced in unmistakable language that I propose to take the Second Reading of the Aliens Bill on the Tuesday on which the House re-assembles, and I explained the grounds on which I hold that that was a legitimate proceeding. I really do not see how any one can object to it.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I object.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I must say I think the objection most unreasonable. The principle of the Bill was carried on Second Reading last year by an enormous majority. I was bitterly reproached last year on the ground that I had wasted the time of the House over Supply in the earlier stages of the session instead of getting on with the Aliens Bill; I have now done my best to get on with the Bill. I have no desire to inconvenience any section of the House.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: This is the principal Bill of the session, and, if the proposed course is adopted, only one Parliamentary day will elapse between its introduction and Second Reading.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The fact that it is the principal Bill of the session is a reason for getting on with it. Hon. Members will have all the leisure of the holidays to meditate on the speeches they propose to deliver. I shall put down as the second order on Tuesday, May 2nd, the Report of the Budget Resolutions, which on the following day will be the first order. On Thursday, Civil Service Estimates, Class I., will be taken, leaving out the Irish Votes; Vote 4, the Houses of Parliament, will stand first, and then Votes 1, 2, and 3, Palaces and Parks.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): Could not the right hon. Gentleman take the Second Reading of the Unemployed Bill on the Tuesday? It is of immeasurably greater importance.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have been told I ought not to take the Aliens Bill because it is so important. How can I reconcile the two things?

Mr. KEIR HARDIE: It is much less controversial.

Mr. LOUGH: Could not the right hon. Gentleman take Supply on Tuesday, and put the Aliens Bill down for Thursday? We had no opportunity of discussing that Bill on the First Reading.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: That would require a special Resolution. I really see no objection to the course I have suggested.

Mr. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury) pointed out that hon. Members had had no opportunity of putting down Questions to the Home Secretary with regard to various points in the Bill.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR replied that, though it was perfectly legitimate to put down Questions in regard to a Bill, the better time to raise them was on the Bill itself.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: When will the Second Reading of the Unemployed Bill be taken?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I cannot make any statement as to that.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire): When will the Scottish Education Bill be taken?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope on an early day after Easter.

NEW BILL.

FERRIES (ACQUISITION BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES) BILL.

"To enable Local Authorities to acquire existing Ferries by agreement," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour and Mr. Solicitor-General; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 2nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 189.]

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE (EASTER).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, 2nd May."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I shall be pursuing a well-established time-honoured, and useful course, in old days more than in modern times in this House, perhaps, when I take this opportunity of addressing a few questions to the Administration, and reviewing, in some sort, the progress of their general policy since the House met. The first subject about which I wish to ask is the South African Constitution. We should all like to know what prospect there is of an early announcement of the policy of the Government in regard to that matter, and whether we shall be furnished with Papers on the subject. The House will remember that when the question of Chinese labour was under discussion we were plied with Papers showing what purported to be the movement of opinion in the Transvaal upon the subject; and casting our minds a little further back we may remember how largely we were informed, whether the information was always accurate or not, as to the state of feeling on the general grounds of policy when there was a controversy between the representatives of this country and Mr. Kruger with regard to the extinction of the franchise in this very community with which we are now dealing. Remembering these things, I feel justified in saying that it would be useful to the House if Papers were presented showing what the Government gather to be the general desire and opinion of our fellow-subjects in the Transvaal as to the new Constitution. The Colonial Secretary used some words the other day which were taken to imply that the new body which the Government seek to create would be entirely composed of elected members. I should like to know whether the right hon. Gentleman was correctly apprehended in that sense.

I turn now to Somaliland. Questions on the subject have been asked of the Government to-day, but I think the Answers are very far from being satisfactory. Here is a quarter of the world where we have spent something like three million sterling, and wasted a great many lives—or, at any rate, brought to an end a great many lives—and a treaty has been entered into between the Mullah and ourselves and between the Mullah and the Italian Government; and while the Italian Chamber has been placed in possession of the circumstances and nature of their engagements, His Majesty's Government, and certainly the House of Commons, a month after the occurrence, are in entire ignorance of the arrangement. I go further afield, to the affairs of Tibet. It has been stated in the newspapers that the Chinese Government have made, or desire, modifications in the treaty which has been concluded, or in the basis upon which it is to be concluded; and I should be glad to know whether that statement is well-founded, what are the nature of these modifications, and what the treaty will ultimately be. I also wish to know the state of things in Afghanistan. We have had a Mission for three months in Kabul. It has now, I believe, returned to India; and yet the House of Commons is not aware why it went, what the course of the negotiations has been, and what is the result achieved. I think it is time that we received some definite and full information upon the subject, which is particularly necessary when we consider what a very important place our relations in that quarter of the world take in His Majesty's Government's conception of what the British Army is to be in the future.

This brings me naturally to the question of the Army itself. In what a curious position the House of Commons stands in regard to that matter! We have had dangled before our eyes for four years some great scheme of Army reform, in the clouds; and this year, again, so indeterminate is the policy of the Government with regard to the Army that our Estimates are provisional and supposititious altogether, for they do not profess to represent the policy of the Government. We have had a diversified debate on the subject, I admit; but no light whatever. All that we have succeeded in ascertaining, and that in a confused form, is the personal opinion—if he had his own way—of the Secretary for War. The latest recorded policy of the Government in regard to the Army is embodied in a Resolution passed by the House of Commons in, I think, 1901, professing agreement in the policy then put forward by the Government as being necessary for the safety of the Empire. I remember that at the time I entered my protest against such a proceeding, because I thought it was not usual to make the House of Commons, as it were, an accomplice in, or a party to, the policy of the Government by a direct expression of approval of that policy. The usual course is for the House of Commons to acquiesce in the policy of the Government by voting their Estimates, but not to pass a direct vote of confidence in it. Anyway, that policy in regard to the Army has been abandoned. No words have been too strong to condemn it: indeed, I might say that no discredit is too great to attach to it; although I do not know that I take that view of it myself. That policy has been abandoned, and yet it stands on our Journal as the recorded opinion of this House that it was the best policy of Army reform which we could possibly enjoy. Is the Government going to bring forward a Resolution to rescind that recorded opinion? It seems to me that it would be only decent for them to do so.

And now that I have come to Resolutions that stand on our Journals, let me refer to certain fiscal Resolutions which have been passed by this House within the last two or three weeks. The right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues appeared to be prepared to discard those Resolutions altogether. Why and upon what plea? I especially refer to the Motion of my hon. friend the Member for Barnsley, which arraigned and challenged the very fiscal policy of His Majesty's Government, if, indeed, there be such a thing at all. But what was it that the right hon. Gentleman said with regard to an earlier Motion—the Motion of the hon. Member for Oldham—in connection with which the right hon. Gentleman took refuge in the previous Question? That was the Motion opposed to the imposition of preferential duties based upon the protective taxation of food. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "The Resolution is not only ambiguous; it is inexpedient. It is inexpedient because it is brought forward under circumstances which, if it were carried by the House, would not merely have the relatively insignificant result of turning out the present Government"—

It is admitted that this Motion by a private Member on a private Member's night would have the effect of turning out the Government if it were carried—

> "but it would have the result of producing a widespread misconception in this country, which is bad, and throughout our Colonial Empire, which is far, far worse."

Sir, I do not understand what right the right hon. Gentleman has to pick and choose among these Resolutions. This one will turn out the Government, and, therefore, we move the previous Question; but this one is a fanciful declaration of opinion of a private Member, and is of no consequence—the latter being a Resolution directed straight against the Government's own views and the policy which they have made the capital question of the day. The right hon. Gentleman may think that this is a very nice way of playing with the House of Commons. I do not think the country takes that view. I hold it is not treating the House of Commons with respect, and it is not treating himself and his position and his own policy with respect. We hear of the degeneracy of the House of Commons, but we have only heard of it in the last few years, and it is treatment such as this to which any degeneracy of the House of Commons in the public mind is attributable. He says of one of these Motions which I am comparing with each other, the one which he met by the previous Question, that it is proposed "under circumstances which would turn out the Government." What are the circumstances? Where are the peculiar circumstances of that particular Resolution which do not attach to all others? We have never had that explained. I venture to think that the Motion of my hon. friend the Member for Barnsley is, in the words of the Prime Minister, far, far worse than that on which he devised the tactics of the previous Question. The truth is the Government cannot claim to represent the country. Month by month and week by week there is evidence of that. That being so, they dare not face the House of Commons. On what ground does their moral authority rest? They seem to be rather a *rara avis* in the constitutional history of this country. Their motto seems to be *j'y suis, j'y reste*—not a very noble or dignified one, and certainly not constitutional; and I think our recent experience, recent within the last generation, shows that it is a basis of rather evil omen upon which to found tenure of office, because in the case in which these celebrated words were used the result was by no means satisfactory to the man who used them.

> "The times have been,
> "That when the brains were out the man would die."

Hon. Members will recollect the very natural exclamation of my countryman when he saw the ghost of Banquo whom he thought he had disposed of. The times have been when a Government, having no policy to declare and no hold upon the country, and daring not to face the House of Commons, did give its charge back into the hands from which it received it.

What, then, is the policy of the Government and its position in this fiscal matter? That is the question we wish to raise shortly to-day. In the last fortnight, we are told, great changes have taken place. The policy of the Government has suffered what is called "a sea change"—that was, I suppose, at Brighton; but whatever the origin may be, there are certain changes. We, of course, are mere spectators of the play, but there is great activity behind the curtain on the stage. We hear a great deal of scraping, and trampling, and shuffling, and rumbling. When the curtain rises is it to be the same performance with the stage furniture a little shifted, and perhaps a little fresh paint, or is it to be a new piece altogether? That is what we want to know. But, as usual, we are only able to put together indications gathered here and there. We have heard of a certain committee meeting from which a search party was sent out to find the Prime Minister, who had of late been missing from the House of Commons. It is reported that they found him and made certain proposals to him, but the reply was postponed, and these proposals were understood to refer to what, in spite of recent events, must still by courtesy be described as the fiscal policy of the Government. The Prime Minister will, perhaps, correct me if I am wrong in suggesting that there may be no such policy in existence; for a Government which declines to support by voice and vote in the House of Commons its own declared views on what, as I said, it has made the capital and cardinal question of the day, lays itself open to some degree of misunderstanding and suspicion. Are we then to be allowed to know what all this has been about? Judging by proceedings at the Liberal Unionist Club, presided over by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, the idea is to make room on the Prime Minister's half-sheet of note-paper for a good show of protectionism. That may not be the right hon. Gentleman's view, but he may be perfectly sure it is other people's. The pious aspirations of the Prime

Minister are to be made to unite gracefully with the darling dreams of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. I should have thought that the Prime Minister's aspirations were cloudy enough, and copious enough of themselves to mask the movements of the most audacious and adventurous adherents of schools of tariff reform, and to conceal the unfortunate little confusion that evidently attaches to them. Under the Prime Minister's half-sheet of note-paper you can do anything or nothing. You can set up one set of tariffs to punish competitors whose tariffs are too high, or you can set up another set of tariffs to confound the foreigner who sends you cheap goods. You can have food taxes, taxes on raw materials, taxes on manufactured goods, taxes on anything you like, so long as you lay your hand on your heart and swear that your intentions are strictly honourable, and that you have no intention of being a protectionist. It is a beautifully elastic formula which does great credit to the ingenuity of its devisor; and I can quite understand that any idea of adding to it or improving upon it must cause the right hon. Gentleman no little pain. But that is by the way. What we should like to know, and are entitled to know, is, is there any change as to the result in the representations that have reached him of all these shiftings, and adjustments, and concealments, and conspiracies, and clevernesses? Mr. Deputy-Speaker, what occurs to us all is this—how much better it would have been, how much more effective, if the Government from the first had pursued a plain and outspoken course.

Now take the clauses of this memorable instrument. Article 1 has to do with negotiations for dealing with hostile tariffs and dumping. Does that stand under the new arrangement as it did, or is any change contemplated? Then there are Articles 2 and 3, dealing with the conference, and there we come on very delicate ground. The half-sheet received a postscript the day after it was published—a postscript which only repeated what the right hon. Gentleman said at Edinburgh, and which had been denounced and rejected at Luton. It proposed, in the strongest terms, two elections—the first election authorising a conference, the second election confirming the decision of the conference. Nothing could be clearer than the right hon. Gentleman's words. But now let me look for a moment at how these two elections will work out in point of time. I read in the sanguine newspapers supporting the right hon. Gentleman that the general election will not take place till next year. Assuming it does not take place till next year, which is a long assumption, then the election will not take place till 1906. Cabinet Ministers have themselves told us that there is sure to be a majority for this side of the House. Then the Liberals will be returned to office. I assume, next, that the doctrine of the Septennial Act is to be applied to all Governments, and not to one more than another, and admitting that there are sometimes accidents affecting the duration of Governments, or any Government which chooses to regard accidents and the feeling of the country, then the Liberals will stay in office until 1912. I am perfectly impartial; I am giving us no more than I am giving you. In 1912 there is another general election, and the Liberals are defeated and a Conference Government comes into office. That is a large assumption, but I will give you the benefit of it. They remain in office until 1918. They take advantage of the full time and do everything they can to keep their people together in the House of Commons and to snap their fingers gallantly at the constituencies and the wretched negligible electors of the country. Here we have come to 1918. During these six years the conference meets, and in 1918 the great point of the election will be that the country should approve or not approve the recommendations of the conference. Then I assume in my generosity that again the Party opposite come in a second time, and that is the second Conference Administration; but it is not until 1918 that Parliament and the country can be invited to consider this question of preferential duties in connection with colonies, whose elections are not necessarily synchronous with ours. There we are then! That is what is meant by not rushing the question. It is a pretty long vista, and in the main it appears to me that everything else must go. But what is going to become of our dying and dwindling trade and our disrupted Empire during this long interval? It is said by way of argument that "Time is on my side"; but I do not think time is on the side of the proposals of the Government in this respect.

But that is not all. Here is another delicate point—the points of reference and the instructions to delegates. This fiscal conference is to be free and unfettered. If we are to make it free and unfettered, will every one else make it free and unfettered? We have no security and no prospect of that, I am afraid. Lord Lansdowne in the other House said, "No instructions will be needed." Apparently there will be an intuition on the part of our delegates as to the limits of variation, as to the Scylla and Charybdis through which they must steer. How near they may go either Scylla or Charybdis we do not know; that is in the discretion or the prejudice of the individual delegate; but there we are. They are to be told not to go beyond a certain point, but how in the world are they to be guided when we know the strong opinions prevailing in this House? The two plain Questions, therefore, in which I concentrate what I have to say are these—Does the Prime Minister abide by the two elections? and secondly, are the British delegates to enter the conference with no instructions of one sort or another?

Now I come to the fourth chapter in the memorable instrument called the "half-sheet of note-paper." The Prime Minister, in the fourth and last article there, says—

> "I do not desire to raise the home prices for the purpose of aiding home production."

The House will observe the "I do not desire"—still this faint language of "desire." Does this phrase cover colonial productions, and are our delegates and the colonial delegates, if not by express reductions, then by some process of elimination, to limit their deliberations merely to how we are to get at what constitutes a protective tariff when every protectionist worth his salt is persuaded, or tries to persuade us, that high tariffs do not make a thing dear because it is the foreigner who pays? How distressing it was the other night to witness the departure of the Chancellor of the Exchequer from this noble dogma when, in taking off the twopence on tea, he said that he was conferring a benefit which would reach every home in the country. I hope that the son is not going to follow his father's policy. To plain people such as we are and such as our countrymen are, who do not care for subtleties, but who wish plain facts and plain opinions, these are the difficulties which occur to us. The confusion that attended the position of the Government in this vital and important matter at the opening of the session has become worse confounded now; and I hold that it is due to the country and to the House of Commons that the Prime Minister should take this appropriate constitutional opportunity of clearing away that confusion

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): The right hon. Gentleman has shown a perhaps natural, but certainly an extensive, curiosity in the course of his speech. Not only has he gone over the twice-told, nay, the thousand-times told, tale of the fiscal discussion in this House, but he began his speech by asking me a large number of Questions about India, Afghanistan, Somaliland, and other great national interests.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: This is the occasion to do it.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I was not complaining of the Questions the right hon. Gentleman asked. It is his right and privilege to ask them, and he has used the right to the utmost. I do not go beyond that. The right hon. Gentleman asked first of all about the Transvaal Papers. My right hon. friend informs me that before the House meets again hon. Members will have an opportunity of studying them. I am told that the new Constitution will be promulgated in the course of the next few days, and that the Papers will be laid on the Table of the House immediately afterwards. As to Papers indicating the temper and mind of the inhabitants of the Transvaal on the questions raised by this constitution, my right hon. friend informs me that he hopes to be able to lay Papers on the Table dealing with that subject before the House again meets, but I should be sorry to pledge him to a day or two.

On Somaliland the right hon. Gentleman accused the Government of indifference to the fate of that country and to the transactions taking place there. But we have not obtained the information with regard to the treaty with the Mullah. When I remember the anxiety that the Somaliland question has caused to us for years past the accusation of the right hon. Gentleman seems to me a strange one. I do not see how it can alter the fact that we have not got the information from General Swayne. It is not in any sense due to the fact that we have not asked for it, but General Swayne is away from the sea coast in the interior and communication is difficult. Though we do not deny that we are surprised at not receiving the information, it is not our fault, and it is no fault of General Swayne's. We do not doubt, however, that the information will be soon in the hands of hon. Members. The right hon. Gentleman then asked whether we had any news of the negotiations with regard to the Tibet Treaty. I understand that we have no information on this subject. The treaty with the Ameer of Afghanistan renews the arrangements made with his father. Papers will be laid on the Table in due time; but there is nothing mysterious in the transaction, and I am glad that the negotiations have come to a successful issue.

The right hon. Gentleman on the Army question asked me to survey and summarise the results of the four or five nights of debate. He can hardly expect me in the course of a reply on the afternoon of the holidays to give even in a most concise fashion my views on the Army question. I have made a speech on one branch of it, and the Secretary for War made many speeches; and I do not think I can, with any advantage either to the House or to the cause of Army reform, now attempt to add to what was then said. I cannot help thinking that the right hon. Gentleman went over this part of the subject more as a painful duty than to give himself pleasure. He expanded only when he came to the familiar and congenial subject of fiscal reform, and then, partly under the guise of Questions and partly in a more direct state, he passed some criticisms on the Government. The first related to the course which the Government had pursued upon certain abstract Resolutions, or private Members' Resolutions, which had been moved on Tuesday or Wednesday nights during the last two months. The right hon. Gentleman asked me how we could reconcile the course pursued on the Resolution of the hon. Member for Oldham, which we made a Government question, with the course we pursued on some later Resolutions, which, no doubt, we treated with indifference. I think the distinction is perfectly plain. In the first place, we thought, and we still think, that there is a limit which it is desirable to observe in the interests of the House for which the right hon. Gentleman professes so very peculiar a regard at the present moment and which he thinks I have neglected. We think that it is contrary to the best interests of this House that Resolutions dealing with the same question should be submitted week after week to the judgment of the House. But that is not nearly all. The right hon. Gentleman, when he favours us with this species of Parliamentary discussion, forgets a fact of which I took the trouble to remind him on an earlier occasion, that the one official Amendment to the Address moved by the Opposition—by the right hon. Member for East Fife, in fact—was a Resolution in which it was stated that this question had been already sufficiently discussed. [Cheers, and OPPOSITION cries of "Not in this House; in the country."] Now what is the distinction? [Cries of "Oh."] Relative to this issue, what is the distinction between the House and the country? No such distinction was drawn or was meant in the Resolution. What was meant clearly was that in the opinion of hon. Members opposite they had had enough of debates on the fiscal question, and they wished to turn us out of office. I cannot understand why they should want to run away from their words. I must next remind the House of what the right hon. Gentleman has forgotten, though he read my speech on the Motion of the hon. Member for

Oldham. I then pointed out that why I attached special importance to that Motion was that, if it were carried, it would indicate to the Colonies that we did not propose to treat the conference as a free conference; and I said it would have the worst possible effect, and have a serious bearing on any future transaction in connection with that conference if this House should commit itself to the proposition that this conference was not to be free. The House determined by a majority that that was to be a free conference; and I do not know why that point should be reopened. The evil effects have been got rid of. I fear them no longer; and I see nothing to be gained, from any point of view—from the economic point of view or from that of informing this House or the Colonies—why those debates should be continued.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Allow me to hark back a little. The right hon. Gentleman said we ran away from our words. Here are our words—

> "The various aspects of the fiscal question having now been fully discussed in the country for nearly two years, the time has come for submitting the issue to the people."

That is not running away.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not agree with the right hon. Gentleman. If that Resolution meant anything, it meant that the question had been sufficiently discussed. It may have meant nothing. It may have been only a preamble or some form of words to enable the Opposition to vote against the Government. But, if it meant anything, it meant that the subject had been thrashed out. Yet these Resolutions came afterwards, and I repeat that when the right hon. Gentleman attacks me for taking the view that there has been an adequate discussion of the question in the House, he is running away from the view which he and his whole Party were supposed to express on the debate on the Address. Hon. Gentlemen have accused me, I am told, in language of almost un-Parliamentary violence [Cries of "No"]—I dare say that they were wrongly reported—of having run away from the House of Commons or from our opinions or from something or other. I am not quite sure what it was we were supposed to have run away from; but if the right hon. Gentleman thinks that we ran away from him, he is quite mistaken. [Cries of "Oh."] After all, it is not I who began bringing these charges of running away; and is every licence of language to be used by hon. Members opposite and am I not to be allowed to suggest that I do not run away from the right hon. Gentleman? Surely that is not an extravagant contention, or one indicating overweening boastfulness on my part. I ventured to point out to the House that the course pursued on those evenings on which we were subject to the criticism of hon. Gentlemen opposite was distinctly laid down by me beforehand, in the speech I made on the Resolution of the hon. Member for Oldham. Was it on that Resolution or on the next? We have had so many that I forget. But our course was laid down beforehand by me in the most explicit terms; and if afterwards I had yielded to the taunts of hon. Gentlemen opposite, then I should have been running away from my words, by having laid down a policy that I did not mean to adhere to. But I did lay down a policy, and I did adhere to it. [Cries of "What policy?"] The policy of not doing anything by speech or countenance to encourage the House to think that I approved of these perpetually recurring debates on one subject, debates which, in my opinion, were inconsistent with the dignity of the House, and could serve no useful purpose. That is the policy I laid down and adhere to, and that is the policy which, if the same circumstances arise in the future, I shall pursue. The right hon. Gentleman told us that we could not face the House of Commons. We face the House of Commons in the only way in which a Government can face the House. We act by its support, depend upon its votes, and meet the censure of right hon. Gentlemen opposite if they wish to censure us. What other course does the right hon. Gentleman wish us to take? He suggests quite distinctly that we ought to regard every private Member's Motion as one by which the Government should stand or fall. I do not agree with that.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: You said the first Motion was such a one.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Certainly, I said that that was of such importance, for reasons already given, that we were determined, if the House did not support us, to resign. The House did support us. I do not know what right the right hon. Gentleman has to object to that course. But the right hon. Gentleman himself has given notice of a vote of censure, which is to come on early after Easter; and we shall be ready to face him then; and if he will moderate the number, but not the severity, of his attacks, we shall be glad to give him other opportunities to see whether we do or do not face the House of Commons. I venture to tell the right hon. Gentleman, if he thinks we have pursued an exceptional course in dealing with these private Members' Motions, that he will pursue precisely the same course in our place; and I think he will be right. [Cries of No."] It never has been regarded as a necessary part of the duties of a Government to obey the Resolutions passed by private Members.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It depends on the subject.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Then the right hon. Gentleman himself draws a distinction between one Resolution and another—the very thing that he attacked me for doing.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: If it is a private Member's Resolution affecting something which does not deeply concern the Government, they may take what course they like. But at any rate they must be prepared to stand the racket. But in this case the right hon. Gentleman ran away from a Resolution brought forward by an hon. Member arraigning the very policy which is the policy of His Majesty's Government.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman has run away from his own argument. It was that I had no right to draw distinctions between one private Member's Resolution and another. He now says that you may draw a distinction, and what is it? It is that when a thing is being discussed a second time you must take part in the debate, and treat the Motion as a vote of censure. But if it is being discussed for the first time, then you may exercise your right of private judgment as to the importance of the occasion. I do not see much difference between "standing the racket," which means listening to speeches more or less interesting, and seeing that a Motion is counted out or talked out.

I remember that there was another private Member's Resolution subsequent to those to which the right hon. Gentleman has made such a lengthy reference, a Resolution which asked very civilly, but very specifically, certain questions in connection with Home Rule, which the right hon. Gentleman answered very civilly, but not at all specifically. We should have liked to see what would have happened on a division. I had a legitimate curiosity on that subject. It appeared to me, if the right hon. Gentleman's own views of the next election are accurate, to be even more relevant to the issue to be put before the country at the next election than anything connected with fiscal reform. One of the right hon. Gentleman's own followers talked it out, and we were deprived of that very legitimate expectation. I do not know whether that is running away or not. If "running away" is used in a moral sense, I should say it was running away in a most obvious manner; and I see no distinction between the course the hon. Gentleman pursued and the course we pursued, except this rather material one, that we have not had five separate debates and divisions on the subject of Home Rule, whereas in the course of the present session we have had that number of debates and divisions on the fiscal question. Therefore I should have thought that the first time there was a debate between the two sides of the House as to the unity of the Party opposite on the subject of Home Rule, as to the policy they were going to declare when they went to the country, as to the views they take of Irish self-government, I should have thought that when that question was raised for the first time this session——

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): We have had co-ordination.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: We have had nothing on the Address on the subject of the policy of hon. Gentlemen opposite nor was it raised in any shape. I should have thought that the Parliamentary heroes who are all for sitting out a debate, standing what they call "the racket," would have grasped at the opportunity of telling us in those plain, unmistakable terms that they love so well, without mistake, circumlocution, or ambiguity, precisely what the Front Bench opposite, to say nothing of hon. Gentlemen behind it, really thought about the question of Home Rule for Ireland. Well, Sir, it is melancholy to think that these Parliamentary heroes have left us in ignorance on that subject at the present moment, that we are still wandering in darkness as to what their true and united views may be upon this all-important Imperial issue, and that we were prevented from obtaining that knowledge by the action, and so far as I know the uncondemned action, of one of their own friends. I should have thought they would have moved the closure themselves rather than talk it out. It is very disappointing, Sir. I am all for receiving in a meek spirit these lectures on Parliamentary courage and heroism, and indifference to criticism, and all the rest of it, and I hope I profit by them. I am sure I try to. But hon. Gentlemen opposite should remember how fatal it is to the true cause of morality when the preacher himself so grossly and so obviously violates his own precepts; and, if there has been any lack of Parliamentary courage shown by any Party or any hon. Gentleman in this House, I fear that the great cause has received almost its deadliest blow from the action of the right hon. Gentleman and his friends in connection with the Home Rule debate. I am sorry for it because, although I do not agree with the right hon. Gentleman in thinking that Parliament is decadent——

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not think so.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I thought the right hon. Gentleman's view was that the high character of Parliament was perishing and that I was the murderer. I am glad he does not take such a gloomy view, and that if I have made efforts to destroy the dignity of Parliament, at all events I have not been successful. Now, he and I are quite agreed about that.

Well, then, the right hon. Gentleman went on to ask me a great many Questions about matters which, if I may venture respectfully to say so, do not seem to me to concern him at all. I do not ask him questions as to why he goes to see Lord Spencer or Lord Rosebery. I do not ask him what is the secret history of Lord Spencer's so-called manifesto. I do not ask him exactly where he stands in relation to Lord Rosebery's views of this or that question of foreign or domestic policy. These are things that hon. Gentlemen must settle among themselves. Surely they will find it quite easy to settle them. I do not for a moment believe that when the right hon. Gentleman or any other eminent persons are asked to form a Radical Administration they will have the smallest difficulty in doing it. But I do not ask questions about it. I hear every day of a new allocation of offices among right hon. Gentlemen and hon. Gentlemen opposite. But I do not believe all these rumours; I know how erroneous such rumours are. I would recommend the same cautious scepticism to the right hon. Gentleman. I do not for a moment believe—I could not believe—in all these stories, because they are not all consistent; but I do not believe, as a matter of fact, in any of them. And I think the right hon. Gentleman may rest assured that the power of rumour to falsify facts is not greater when it is dealing with the internal affairs of our Party than it is when dealing with the internal affairs of his Party. I would venture to suggest to him that if once we begin asking each other Questions across the floor of the House as to what passes in the lobby, or what passes at private meetings or in private correspondence, if any Answers are given to these Questions public life will not be rendered more agreeable to any of the persons concerned; and I cannot help thinking, though here I may be wrong, the Party which would lose most by so novel and so inconvenient a practice would be the hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite. When the right hon. Gentleman asks me what is going on behind the curtain, I would remind him that there are two curtains, that probably there is quite as much going on behind one curtain as behind the other, and that I do not consider one Party has the slightest right to subject the other to a cross-examination upon those subjects simply because they sit upon one side of the House or upon the other.

That leads me to the last observation I have to make. The right. hon. Gentleman has throughout his speech assumed that I have endeavoured to make the fiscal question the main point to be discussed by this Parliament. Not only is that inaccurate, but it is precisely the reverse of the fact. I have from the beginning, rightly or wrongly, consistently stated that in my judgment one Parliament is not well advised in discussing matters which cannot come before it, but which may come before its successor. It wastes its own time, it raises an enormous number of false issues, and it invariably leads to much confusion. That doctrine, as everybody knows, it has been impossible to carry out consistently. I did my best; I admit I had to give up the task. But I nevertheless think that this perpetual preoccupation with matters with which this House, as this House, will never be called upon to deal does not add either to our utility or to our efficiency as a legislative and deliberative Assembly. The right hon. Gentleman has actually extended this view of what the House of Commons ought to do till the year 1918. I confess that such declarations as I have made, on a half-sheet of note-paper or otherwise, upon questions of high Imperial policy are statements relating to the immediate future. I am not going to pledge myself or my friends, and I think hon. Gentlemen opposite will be much less wise than I conceive them to be if they pledge themselves or their friends to the policy that ought to be pursued in 1918. Who can possibly touch this fiscal question in days like these and state with assurance what policy this country ought to pursue on that or any other question in 1918? The thing is ludicrous and absurd. It is sufficient for each of us to state what we propose to do at the next election if we are called upon to manage the affairs of the country. I have endeavoured to state what I should recommend to my country. The right hon. Gentleman does not understand my statement. He always is glad to do himself an intellectual injustice. He has not told us what he means to say to the country, either on that or any other question, if he is called upon. [An HON. MEMBER: Why should he? He is not in office.] Because he says he is going to be called upon. He says, "You are not going to be called to office after the next election. Therefore you must tell us precisely what you would do if that happened which is not going to happen." We reply that, if we are not going to be called upon, you are; and, if it is so necessary that this House of Commons should preoccupy itself with what the next Government is going to do, the right hon. Gentleman should cross-examine his own friends as to what they mean to do on the colonial question, the fiscal question, and the Irish question. These gentlemen, who are so anxious to face the House of Commons, so anxious to face the music, and have such insatiable appetites for short, clear, and lucid statements of policy, have told us nothing, obscurely or unobscurely, neither on a half-sheet of note-paper nor on a full sheet of foolscap. I sometimes almost think that this silence of hon. Gentlemen opposite is involuntary silence; that they do not tell us what their policy is because they have not got a policy. That may be so. In that case their silence is excusable, though it is still regrettable. I think they should tell us candidly how the case stands; they should face the music; they should stand the racket. And I would seriously suggest, both to the right hon. Gentleman and to any hon. Gentleman who may propose to follow me in this debate, that it is on their own showing, and according to their own view, a far more interesting and important matter that the country should know what they mean to do, who, in their view, will have the power of doing it, than that we should state what we propose to do, who, as they say, have not the confidence of the country, and will not have the confidence of the country, and are going to be relegated, for six years at least, into hopeless opposition. I have endeavoured to the best of my ability to satisfy the right hon. Gentleman. I do not know whether I have succeeded. I have endeavoured to follow him over the vast and varied field which he has opened for consideration; but really, if he is not satisfied with this last endeavour, it seems to me he is a man whose ideal is so high that we on this side can never hope to reach the Parliamentary standard which he has set up for us and which, it may be, he thinks he has succeeded in attaining for himself.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) said the Prime Minister had expressed doubt as to whether he had succeeded in satisfying the curiosity of the Leader of the Opposition. The right hon. Gentleman had succeeded in the object he had in view, and that was not to supply any information on any of the Questions put by the Leader of the Opposition. He did not think the House knew anything on the Questions put which they did not know before the right hon. Gentleman spoke. In fact, the Prime Minister was an adept at answering inconvenient Questions in a way which supplied the House with a maximum of entertainment and a minimum of information. That was what he had really done on the present occasion. Two Questions were put by the Leader of the Opposition to which he should like to refer. With regard to the question of Somaliland, what was the position? We had been at war with the Mullah for two or three years, and we had spent something like £3,000,000 on that war. A treaty had been entered into by Italy, and that treaty covered the case of England. It was published in the Italian Parliament a fortnight ago, and Questions were put in regard to it. Although the treaty almost exclusively referred to our dominions the House had no information about it except what the newspapers gave. This was a good example of the way in which the Government managed the foreign policy of the country.

He came now to the second Question put by the Leader of the Opposition. The Prime Minister seemed to imagine that there was some sort of analogy between the way Home Rule had been treated by the Opposition and the way he treated the fiscal question, but he forgot the facts of the case. For two days they debated an Amendment to the Address on the question of Home Rule which was moved by the hon. and learned Member for Waterford. His recollection wos that every Member on his side of the House voted for the Amendment. That did not look like running away. The Prime Minister had suggested that the Opposition did not want a division on the Resolution moved by the hon. Member for Rochester. Whose fault was that? Forty minutes were consumed by the hon. Member for Mid-Armagh and his friends, and there were only two hours left for the discussion of the question of Home Rule.

Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.) said he had nothing to do with the fixing of the date for the Great Northern (Ireland) and Midland Railways Bill. The date for it was fixed before the Motion of the hon. Member for Rochester was put on the paper.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE said the hon. Member had, as the hon. Member for Louth put it, to elect between a level-crossing and the Empire, and he thought the level-crossing was more important. Would any hon. Member compare the speech of the Leader of the Opposition on the Home Rule Resolution with the speeches of the Prime Minister on the fiscal question. The speech of the Leader of the Opposition on the Motion of the hon. Member for Rochester was one of the bravest speeches ever delivered in this House—a singularly frank, clear, and courageous utterance, in which no one could say that there was any shrinking from beginning to end; and any one who watched the face of the Prime Minister during its delivery must have seen that that was his opinion. Complaint was made that they had not divided on the Motion of the hon. Member for Rochester. What was there to divide on? The Resolution of the hon. Member for Rochester did not condemn Home Rule. It simply called on the Leader of the Opposition to express his views as to the future. That leader, although he did not recognise any right to put to him the question, responded; and the response having been given, what was there to divide upon? The hon. Member for Rochester asked for the views of the Leader of the Opposition and others upon this matter, but the hon. Member for Mid-Armagh left the House no time, preferring to discuss a question of a level-crossing.

MR. LONSDALE said he did not put down the Private Bill, it was put down by the Chairman of Ways and Means.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said the hon. Member had to choose between discussing the Empire or a level-crossing, and chose the latter. The Prime Minister knew he was trifling with this question of fiscal reform; and he knew the distinction between his own position and that of the Leader of the Opposition, whose views had not the official sanction of a Prime Minister's. Something more was due to the House from the Prime Minister than anything he had conceded to the House yet. One of the Resolutions from which he ran away expressly condemned his policy of fiscal retaliation announced at Sheffield in his capacity of Leader of the Government, when he said he meant to lead. There was a direct challenge of the policy of fiscal retaliation, the policy of the head of the Government, and the right hon. Gentleman ran away from it. It was all very well for the right hon. Gentleman to say that he was not understood by the Opposition, but the curiosity as to his views was not confined to the Opposition. What did the deputation to the right hon. Gentleman mean? There were 190 gentlemen who believed the existence of the Empire depended on these questions being discussed; Gentlemen who used to believe in the right hon. Member for Birmingham. The right hon. Member for Birmingham thought the existence of the Empire depended upon it, and thought his new policy was going to bring a new era to the Empire. He was not the only false prophet who had inaugurated a new era by a flight. What had happened so recently would be regarded as a fiscal Hegira. He thought they had a right to know, and the country had a right to know, what the Prime Minister was going to do for the Empire. What was he going to do with these things upon which the Empire hung

The Prime Minister had said that this matter had been discussed amply, but the reply had been that it had only been discussed in the country, and the right hon. Gentleman had asked what was the difference between discussions in the country and that House. There was a great distinction between debate in the House and discussions at packed meetings in the country, where any one interrupting could be placed in a better atmosphere, where he could not interfere with the arguments or statistics of the speakers. The perplexity of the right hon. Gentleman's own followers was illustrated by the experience of the hon. Member for Truro, who, being asked whether he could pledge himself at the next election against the taxation of food, said, "Certainly not; you can ask me that when I come down; I shall know where I am next time." Here was this poor wandering sheep, and the shepherd would not guide him. Why did not the Prime Minister take pity on the perplexities of his poor heckled supporter? These supporters were loyal, loyal to perfection, but perhaps the Prime Minister knew how to rate that loyalty, and indeed it was comparable only to the loyalty of the animals to the Ark. It was the only security from the Deluge; and they probably admired the ingenuity of the constructor, though glad to get rid of it when the waters subsided. But if the Prime Minister sank, few would be able to swim to Ararat. That might explain the loyalty; still loyalty it was, and it remained, though doubts increased and confidence diminished. Even the right hon. Member for Birmingham remained loyal under a most severe test. The right hon. Gentleman was actually called upon to run away after the Prime Minister from the battle he himself challenged, and loyalty carried to the extent of making oneself ridiculous was exceptional; there had been nothing like it since Antony fled from the battle of Actium, simply because Cleopatra had preceded him. It was devotion truly pathetic; and yet the Prime Minister did not respond and tell his supporters what he meant. Why did he not come from behind the veil and tell his supporters and the country what he really was. They were entitled to know, the country was entitled to know; but could any hon.

Gentleman give an assurance whether the Prime Minister was a free-trader or a protectionist? He was certain there was not one of them who would like to give an assurance or make a book upon it. He himself had his own theory about it, and it was that the Prime Minister did not care whether his Party sailed into a free trade or a protectionist port, so long as they reached a harbour of refuge, and he was on the bridge when they got there. That was a dangerous thing to allow to go on, for the Prime Minister would be able to utilise a free-trade crew for the purpose of getting nearer a protectionist country. It was only fair, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman should say what his views really were.

Of course the Liberal Party had everything to gain by the Prime Minister's shilly-shallying and delay. Protection was a very taking cry, and it went well for a short time in the country. Taxation of foreign products and protection for our own industries made an insidious election cry, and the Prime Minister and the right hon. Member for Birmingham worked together like twin screws in the ship of fiscal reform. Luckily one of the screws stopped working and the ship made no progress; but if there had then been an appeal to the country the Liberal majority would not have been large, and probably in the difficulties they would have had to meet a Liberal Government might have been beaten. The Prime Minister had saved them from that by giving the country time to reflect on fiscal fallacies. He sometimes wondered if the Prime Minister did this deliberately. If he did this as a free-trader it was cleverly done, but the right hon. Gentleman's sense of honour raised doubts; it would have not been consistent with his messages of sympathy to fiscal reformers, his blessing on the crusade and the crusader, his pamphlets, and his suggestion for a change of system. It was not done then to help free trade, and what was the cause of delay? It was perfectly clear to everybody that the House and the country were not going to have any measure of protection. The Leader of the Opposition in his speech had suggested that there was going to be another attempt to refurbish up the weapon of protection. That might be so, but for his part he was not afraid, for where was that great Party of 190 who used to follow and believe in the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham?

Weakened in power and numbers, the followers of the Prime Minister could hide behind half a sheet of note-paper; but what were they waiting for? In 1903 the education cry was going strong; it was still going strong, and the spirit of the slaughtered school boards appeared later at Brighton, like Banquo's ghost at Macbeth's banquet. In 1904 it was Chinese labour which led them to hesitate; in the autumn of 1904 it was sugar. What was it now in 1905? The misdeeds of the Government in 1902 over the Education Act were still alive in the public memory to-day. The public memory had not forgotten any one of their misdeeds during the last three years. Anyone who watched the course of events realised that the effect of all those things was cumulative. The electors did not pass them by, did not forget them, but set down each item on the debit side of the ledger, and in due time would exact settlement to the uttermost farthing. What was the Prime Minister waiting for? He was not going to the country upon fiscal reform? In Glasgow he said he would appeal to the record of his Ministry. What a record! There was only one solitary asset in his Cabinet, and that was his Foreign Minister, Lord Lansdowne. Why? Because he had pursued a Liberal foreign policy. He sometimes wondered, if a Liberal Foreign Minister had done what Lord Lansdowne had done; if he had made an arrangement with France which might in time of war make the passage of the Straits of Gibraltar more easy—he did not say that that was too high a price to pay for peace—but supposing a Liberal Foreign Minister had done this, would not every Tory platform have rung with denunciations and suggestions of treason? Supposing a Liberal Government had referred the unpleasant incident on the Dogger Bank to arbitration, and had allowed the offending fleet to proceed and add to the difficulty of our allies in the Far East—if a Liberal Ministry had done that, one knew perfectly well what would have been said by the Party opposite. Still, with all that, Lord Lansdowne was the only solid asset of the Prime Minister's Government. Every other Minister was a bad debt; Lord Lansdowne was the only asset which the Government had with which to liquidate their indebtedness. But the electorate would hold a strict audit of the items—sugar, Army reform, education, licensing, agricultural rates, doles to the landlords, and the rest. He would not except the Prime Minister himself. That right hon. Gentleman was also a bad debt; and there stood to his charge three things especially—education, reform of the Army, which would cost millions of money, and the Committee of Defence, composed of the greatest tacticians since Wellington.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR interrupted with a remark which was inaudible in the gallery.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said he was sorry that the right hon. Gentleman was not the greatest tactician since Wellington. If the right hon. Gentleman said so, it was not for him to press that honour upon him; and certainly he would withdraw his remark.

Well now, there were two other great questions which the country would not forget. The first was the right hon. Gentleman's management of the business of the House, and the second, the difficulties he had got into at the cost of liberty in debate in the House of Commons. It was all very well for the Prime Minister to deride what the Leader of the Oppositon said, but the country would not forget what the Prime Minister had done to curtail liberty of debate in that House. The country centred a good deal of hope in the House of Commons. There was not a poor artisan in the East End who did not look to the House of Commons if he thought his livelihood was being taken away by a Russian or Polish alien. And the agricultural labourer, the sugar-refiner, the man badly housed, the man whose children were underfed, the man too old to earn his living and looking for a pension —these all looked to that Assembly to protect them against the oppressor in every shape; and if the Prime Minister treated this Assembly as a jest, he would have to face by-and-by the people, who looked upon it as their refuge.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said he would take the opportunity of this Motion to address a Question or two to the hon. Gentleman the Secretary of the Board of Trade in regard to the Sugar Convention. His hon. friend seemed to think that the sugar question was a past issue; that the country was not interested in it; and that it was believed that nothing could be done to modify any of the arrangements that had been made. He had recently made a little diary of the proceedings of the Government in regard to this matter on which hon. Members had never had an opportunity of cross-examining the hon. Gentleman. There was a reason. It might have been said that they could hardly expect the Secretary to the Board of Trade to give any explanation on a subject which might be described to be *sub judice*. But the hon. Gentleman said the other day that a decision had been arrived at by the Brussels Convention on a question of vast importance to this country, and he wished to ask the hon. Gentleman to tell the House clearly and plainly to-day what the Government were thinking of doing. On 3rd June last San Domingo was suddenly prohibited by the Board of Trade from exporting sugar into this country. On 26th November, a despatch was circulated in this country practically ordering the Government to prohibit the import of sugar from twenty great countries which produced half the sugar of the world. On 3rd December, notice was given that the Government had lodged an appeal in regard to the prohibition of imports of sugar from these twenty countries; but the mystery of that appeal had never been explained. On 4th February the prohibition of imports from San Domingo was withdrawn; and on 10th April they were informed that the Brussels Convention had met to consider the appeal. The hon. Member told the House the other day that the appeal had been successful.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BONAR LAW, Glasgow, Blackfriars) said that what he had stated was that the appeal had been successful to a certain extent.

MR. LOUGH said that then the House was entitled to ask for fuller information. They were told suddenly last week that the prohibition would not take place; but what they wanted to understand was what had happened in connection with the Convention itself. Would the hon. Gentleman tell the House what had happened in regard to all those twenty countries; and were they not to take any steps in respect to the condemnation of all those twenty countries? This was no light matter. The Convention had driven the sugar trade of the country into confusion. If the Government would go steadily in support of the decisions of the Convention; if they would prohibit the importation of sugar into this country in every case where the Convention condemned it, then they would know where they were. But the Government appeared to take what course they pleased, and were not guided at all by what the Convention did. The situation was, therefore, very extraordinary. This House was watching what was being done in the Brussels Convention; and he wanted to ask the hon. Gentleman:—Was it true that the appeal was to come on in a month? It seemed that the Government had suggested that the appeal should be postponed for five months; but on what grounds was that postponement made? Why, the object of insisting originally on an appeal being made was that a hearing should be given to it quickly in order to prevent any uncertainty in regard to what the law was. This Government, which was the first to set up the Convention, said: "Let us break the law, and let appeals be postponed for five months." What was the reason for that long postponement? The position appeared to him to be that the Convention, sitting at Brussels, had condemned half the sugar-producing countries in the world; but that this Government refused to obey the orders of that Convention in regard to a great many of those countries. Why should this Government obey the orders of the Convention in regard to any?

He wished to call attention to the case of Russia. The greatest inconvenience had been caused by the prohibition in regard to Russia and Germany. But the Germans had come to an arrangement with Russia by which they were able to continue their sugar trade with Russia. Why should the Germans have arranged with Russia, while we made no attempt whatever to get over the difficulty? Russia immediately protested against the condemnation of her system by the Convention, and after the Russian delegates were received and heard, no decision was arrived at. The British Government interfered in a hostile way with Russia; and the Convention had arrived at no decision in regard to what countervailing duties should be imposed on sugar. The result was that the produce of that country was shut out from this country—one of the best countries in the world for trade from abroad. Could not the right hon. Gentleman opposite give some hope of withdrawing the prohibition against Russia? There was another country to which prohibition had been applied—he meant Argentina. Now, Argentina was almost in the position of a British colony; and why should not our trade with that colony be free as before? This Government had only to speak a word, as in the case of San Domingo, and our ports would be open to Argentine sugar again. He did not want to detain hon. Members; but the House ought to remember that this policy of prohibition was not the first policy which the Board of Trade had adopted. The late President of the Board of Trade, the right hon. Member for Leeds, said that there must be a policy of countervailing duties. That was a sudden change; and what was the reason for it. The Board of Trade lately issued a White Paper which stated the amount of exports to many of those countries previously referred to, and it was found that 60 per cent. of our sugar trade came from those countries. It was impossible to shut our ports to countries that took such a large amount of our exports, and therefore this country should either be guided by the policy of the Convention, or repudiate the Convention altogether.

The question of price was of great importance when they had regard to the great evils which arose from the rise in the price of sugar. He noticed that in the first three months of this year we got 10 per cent. less sugar than in the first three months of last year, which showed a great diminution in the natural import of sugar, but when he looked at the price paid for it he found that the country paid 50 per cent. more for the sugar it consumed during that period than was paid in the corresponding period of the previous year, which meant that this country was paying £9,000,000 a year more for sugar than before the Convention. They were told that prices had risen in other commodities. True, but there was no Convention with regard to those. He asked the hon. Member for a little light on this subject, and hoped he would tell the House why the Government could not apply the same policy to Russia and Argentina as they had applied to the other countries he had mentioned. Why could we not lodge an application and then postpone the hearing for a year or two in these cases. The Government ought to adopt a consistent policy, and, having regard to the sufferings of the people engaged in the great trades connected with sugar he hoped the hon. Gentleman would tell them they would not be abandoned altogether.

MR. BONAR LAW said the hon. Gentleman had stated that the Government seemed to be able to do exactly what it pleased. He remembered listening to a great many debates in which, on the contrary, the Government were told that they would constantly be at the mercy of other Powers. The hon. Gentleman had referred to the meeting of the Convention. It was impossible for him to deal with the points raised. They had not yet received even a draft of the report, and it would obviously be improper to discuss the matter before the report had been received. As regarded the prohibition orders, it seemed to him that the subject was one on which the country desired the earliest information, and he had accordingly considered himself justified in informing the House that no new prohibition orders would take place. Another point which had been raised was why we did not get the Convention to allow us to cease the prohibition of Russian and Argentine sugar. The hon. Gentleman had entirely misunderstood the action which the Government had taken. They had based their appeal, in the case of the countries which had been referred to, on the ground that no bounty had been proved. In the case of Argentina and Russia it was admitted that there was a bounty, and therefore the Government had not the slightest doubt about the necessity for prohibition.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.) said, having drawn attention to the state of education among the Tamil coolies in Ceylon, he had thought that as a great many of their fathers had come from India it was desirable to inquire into the state of education in India itself. He found that the fourth Quinquennial Review of Indian Education for the years 1897-8 to 1901-2, published in 1904, contained a large amount of information on the subject. It went over an enormous amount of ground, embracing all the forms of education in India, from the simplest primary schools to the Universities. One thing that must strike any one whose attention was drawn to this subject was the limited amount of education compared with the huge population of India. There were 250,000,000 of inhabitants and five Universities—Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, Punjab, and Allahabad. There were 191 colleges, which contained 23,009 pupils who were taught the usual subjects at those colleges. Below the colleges there were 5,495 secondary schools with an attendance of 558,378, and 98,538 primary schools with an attendance of 3,260,000 pupils. If to those were added some special schools, technical and industrial, and schools of art for teachers, the total number of educational establishments was 105,306, with an attendance of 4,500,000 pupils. That was a very small number of educational establishments for a country with a population of 250,000,000. It did not reflect any credit either on this nation or the Indian Government that they had allowed such poor results to be shown in our chief dependency. It was only lately that the Government had taken over the schools, but he did not believe they had done anything to improve them. Ten years ago, when he visited India, he saw some of those schools and found that they were many of them most miserable places, and he did not believe any great change had taken place since.

The extension of education in India of course depended upon the increase of expenditure. That was the chief motive power. Schools could not be multiplied without money. At the present moment, the education of India was exceedingly cheap. It did not cost more than £1,300,000, which was not an enormous cost for the education of such an enormous number of people. This sum was obtained from various sources, 127 lakhs of rupees came from fees, eighty-three from endowments and subscriptions, 191 from public funds, 104 from provincial revenues, seventy-four from local revenues, and thirteen from the revenues of native states. He did not presume to suggest to the Government from what sources they should obtain an increase of funds for this purpose, but simply to show that there was a considerable amount of education to be provided and that a large amount of funds should also be provided in order that better education should be given. On page 462 of this review it said 15 per cent. of the population were of school-going age. That was to say that of the 18,000,000 boys that ought to have been at school only one-sixth were receiving education. In the census of 1901 it was found that only one in ten of the male population and only one in 1,000 of the female population were literate. In four villages out of five only one boy in four and only one girl in forty attended school. Progress in supplying education declined proportionately as the population increased. A Government Education Commission in 1883 said that—

> "The elementary education of the masses, its promotion, extension, and improvement, should be the part of the educational system to which the strenuous efforts of the Government should be directed in a still greater measure than before."

That was the language of a Royal Commission, which was rather mild, as the language of Royal Commissions always was, but the House would feel that they might well have used stronger terms with regard to the want of primary education in India. Lord Lawrence in 1886 said—

> "Among all the sources of difficulty in our administration and of possible danger to the stability of the Government there is none so serious as the ignorance of the people."

It was the want of education which kept alive the prejudices and differences and maintained the caste system, and it was to our advantage in India, as well as to the advantage of the people themselves, to give them a larger and wider education. The education of girls was most backward of all. He admitted with regard to the education of girls in India that there were special difficulties which were not easy to overcome owing to the customs of the people, whether Hindus or Mohammedans. He would not trouble the House with the details of inquiries that had taken place with respect to the girls, he would only say that though it might be difficult to introduce education amongst the female population of India, he did not think that that was any reason why the effort to do so should be abandoned. He had no doubt that if the Indian Council in London used their great ability they would be able to evolve methods by which education might be promoted among the female population, in spite of those customs, in the interest of the country.

The main point to keep in mind was that to increase education increased expenditure was necessary. Reference had been made to some obstacles to education, and with regard to that the Quinquennial Review said—

> "These, however, are minor obstacles which would soon be swept away if the main difficulty of finding the requisite funds for extending primary education could be overcome."

Why could not the money used in border wars be turned into these peaceful and improving channels. He noticed that a large sum was to be spent on a Durbar in the immediate future and he suggested that that money might be better employed on education. The expenditure for the war in Tibet would fall upon India, and that money could certainly have been used to much better advantage in promoting education than in the promotion of a war which was of very doubtful value to the nation. One most curious thing was that there were many defects in the education in India which were similar to those we found here. For instance, higher education was chiefly pursued either for the purpose of following the law or obtaining Government appointments, excessive prominence was given to examination, and the courses of study were too literary. The intelligence was trained too little and the memory too much. That was a familiar fault in this country. English education was pushed too much and the vernacular languages were too neglected instead of being used as the vehicle for diffusing knowledge. The Government of India now seemed alive to these defects and proposed to apply remedies, and he wished them all success. At the same time it was not undesirable that attention should be drawn to this in England so that some assistance might be given to the rulers of our Indian Empire. It was to be hoped that those who now studied for the law and Government positions would turn their attention to the study of teaching, and it would be desirable if young men from Oxford and Cambridge would turn their attention to India as a sphere of employment for educationists or for those who would take to it as a profession. According to the census of 1901 the Mohammedans were much behind. Only sixty per 1,000 were literate, and only three per 1,000 of females were taught. The Review, at page 367, said—

> "Throughout the greater part of India the Mohammedans have made much slower progress than the Hindus."

The Parsees, Europeans, and Eurasians, were not much referred to in the Review, but by far the larger proportion of those three races received education. He much regretted that the Viceroy in a speech made at the opening of the University should have made use of the phrase, "Truth is born in the West but does not often visit the East." It was not a wise thing to taunt the whole people in that way, and he regretted it the more because the Viceroy had shown much ability and had given much assistance to the Indian people. In conclusion, he appealed to the Government to do more for Indian education from Imperial funds.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford) said the hon. Member had brought forward a very important subject at a moment when they could not enter fully into consideration of this great question. He assured the hon. Member and the House that the immediate importance of the question of Indian education had not been lost sight of. Those who were responsible for the finances of India realised the importance of giving a fresh stimulus to primary education. Up to a certain period the increase in attendance and the elevation of the general standard was in as great a proportion as, perhaps in a greater proportion than, the progress of India in other directions. In 1870 there were 16,400 primary schools, with 607,000 scholars in attendance. In 1881 the numbers had increased to 83,000 and 2,061,000 scholars. But after that date the rate of progress was not so great, for, between 1881 and 1901, the number of schools had only been raised to 98,500 and the scholars to 3,268,000, whereas it was computed that there were something like 18,000,000 children in India of school age. The expenditure on primary education in 1891–2 was 49½ lakhs, but in 1901–2 it it was 63 lakhs. For the last three years the Government of India had given the local governments 40 lakhs annually as grants to general education, but, in the recent Budget, following the observations that were made in that House last year, an additional sum of 35 lakhs was included for primary education alone. He found himself in sympathy with much that the hon. Member had said with regard to female education. A rate of seven per thousand females receiving education was in itself a most lamentable state of things. In the moral welfare of children the education of the mother was perhaps a more important consideration than the education of the father, and by the establishment of primary girls' schools in important centres and by increasing the number of training schools, the Government of India were doing what they could to promote female education and to popularise that which was in itself most desirable. The hon. Member might rest assured that there was no apathy in this matter either on the part of the Government of India or of whose who controlled the finances of India. With regard to the speech of the Viceroy which had been referred to he thought his observations had been somewhat misunderstood, and he had evidently been the victim of a misinterpretation which had been placed upon his words, a difficulty which constantly beset Members of this House, and from which the Members sitting on the Treasury Bench were not altogether exempt. ✓

SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N. E.) said he wished to draw the attention of the House to the great want of proper facilities for discussing Indian questions, and he also desired to ask the Prime Minister if he could appoint another day a little earlier than usual for the discussion of the Indian Budget. He thought this request would meet with the sympathy of Members on both sides of the House. He believed that the Secretary of State for India himself was anxious to have an earlier date for the introduction of the Indian Budget.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: As the hon. Member has given notice of a Motion in regard to this question, it would be out of order for him to discuss it now.

SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE said that under the circumstances he would invite the attention of the Secretary of State for India to a subject of which he had not given notice of Motion. In a few days time there would be published a document conferring a measure of self-government upon the Transvaal. The question of the treatment of British subjects in the Transvaal had attracted general attention, both in the House of Commons and in the country, and he should like to hear from his right hon. friend whether he had taken any steps to secure that when self-government was granted to the Transvaal the rights and privileges which British Indians had enjoyed in the past would be safeguarded, or whether they would be left entirely at the mercy of the Transvaal Government. He hoped that the Secretary for India, as the custodian of the rights and privileges of the people of India, and whose special care it was to take care of the interests of the vast populations of the Indian Empire, would do all that lay in his power to see that any new rights which were conferred upon the Transvaal would not be used to further oppress and humiliate the subjects of His Majesty who went from India to South Africa to settle in that colony. He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would give the House some satisfactory Answer on this point.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said the hon. Member who had just sat down had called attention to a fact which was familiar to every Member of the House, namely, the extraordinary manner in which the fate and fortune of hundreds of millions of people in India were dealt with by this House. He thought it was a scandal that it was only on a hot August afternoon, in an almost empty House, that the business of the great dependency of India was discussed in this House. He thought the House could very well afford to give more attention to India. The reason why India got so little attention was that the House of Commons was too busily engaged trying to settle the local affairs of these islands, and so long as the House retained eighteenth century methods so long would India and other parts of the Empire be neglected.

He wished to say a few words upon the general policy of the Government. They had just listened to an admirable speech—perhaps he had better call it a performance—by the Prime Minister. He had often listened with admiration to the extraordinary skill with which the right hon. Gentleman evaded difficult Questions, but his performance to-day excelled all his previous efforts. He was asked several Questions, but he had not given an Answer to one of them. He could recommend the right hon. Gentleman to the gentleman on the Continent who had just lost the services of the lady who had been looping the loop, because for acrobatic skill in looping the Parliamentary loop the right hon. Gentleman had no equal. The right hon. Gentleman and his Government had been condemned in every constitutional form which the nation possessed of expressing its opinion. Whether in rural or urban constituencies, even in places where the Conservative candidate was supposed to be quite safe, the right hon. Gentleman and his policy had been rejected, and the people condemned him. The Prime Minister was now taking advantage of the technicalities of politics to hold power which the country desired to deprive him of. He had been very much struck with a passage written by Mr. J. R. Green, the eminent historian, who wrote—

> "It is impossible to provide for some of the greatest dangers which can happen to national freedom by any formal statute; even now a Minister might avail himself of a Parliament elected in some moment of popular panic; and though the nation return to its senses, might simply, by refusing to appeal to the country, govern in defiance of its will. Such a course would be technically legal; but such a Minister would be none the less a criminal."

He thought those words admirably summed up the present case. This Parliament was elected in the midst of the popular excitement caused by the war. It was elected, as some members of the Government stated, on one issue, namely, to bring the war to an end. The war being ended, people were returning to their senses, and they were now as opposed to the Government as some years ago they were in its favour. And yet the Ministry refused to appeal to the country, and, though technically legal, such a course was, as Mr. Green said, none the less criminal. An erudite authority on the Constitution, at page 372 of his work on the "Law and Customs of the Constitution," wrote—

> "We must not forget that the possible violation of the law is not the only reason why a Ministry should retire when it is shown to have lost the confidence of the House or of the country. Ministers are not only Ministers of the Queen, they represent the public opinion of the United Kingdom; when they cease to impersonate public opinion they become a mere group of personages who must stand or fall by the prudence of their action. They may have to deal with disorders at home or hostile manifestations abroad; they would have to meet these with the knowledge that they had not the confidence or support of the country; and their opponents at home and abroad would know this too."

Mr. T. P. O'Connor.

The writer plainly foresaw the situation with which they were now confronted, namely, that the Ministry might retain the confidence of the majority in the House of Commons, although they had ceased to impersonate public opinion. He understood that the esoteric defence given by the Prime Minister was that in spite of the condemnation of the country he and his eminent colleagues were able to deal with the international complications which the country at this moment had to face. He was not going to speak of the superior genius of those now in office to those who might succeed them. It was true that they were practically unknown and obscure individuals who would never have been heard of had it not been that in the hurly-burly of politics the Prime Minister was obliged to take the few men left who were in accord with his policy. Even if their genius were equal to the claims they made the fact remained that they were the worst kind of Government to deal with foreign complications. What respect had any foreign Minister for a Government that had ceased to represent the public opinion of the country.

No Government could be so universally condemned as the present one had been. The maintenance of the present Ministry by the Prime Minister was mainly inspired by the desire to keep his Party together, and above all to overcome the Member for West Birmingham. A good many had expressed doubts as to the Prime Minister's wisdom, judgment, and firmness of character. He did not share these views. The Prime Minister was playing a game, and he had played it extremely well. He and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham were contesting for the leadership of the Party, and the latter had been beaten. When Mr. Gladstone was leader of the Liberal Party the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was the man on whose loyalty he could depend. He knew that unholy doubts had been cast on that statement. He was present in the House on the historic night when Mr. Parnell charged the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham with having intrigued against his Liberal colleagues in regard to Irish policy, and with having afterwards abjured the opinions which he then professed. But these were squalid doubts from which he entirely dissociated himself. That loyal supporter had great confidence in his own powers, and he always seemed to think that he could do the job a little better than the man in front of him. The Prime Minister had managed successfully to isolate the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. *The Times* had compared the two right hon. Gentlemen to two accomplished whist players, one giving hints to the other. He also would draw a comparison from the card table. Both had been playing another game, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had been euchred. The fact was that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was beaten in the country, in the House, and in the Unionist Party. The Irish were sometimes supposed to be a vindictive race, but he entirely disclaimed that reputation. If they were vindictive, surely never could a race rejoice in a greater Nemesis than this which had overtaken the man who, eighteen years ago broke the Liberal Party and destroyed the great chance which the Irish people had of gaining liberty. The Unionist Party was now broken to smithereens by the very man who broke the Liberal Party. [AN HON. MEMBER: Give him a chance.] If the hon. Gentleman meant a chance of going to the country, he could only say that that invitation should be addressed to the Prime Minister.

The hon. Member for Carnarvon in his eloquent speech that afternoon had referred to the feeling of the Prime Minister towards the House which he was supposed to lead as one of undisguised scorn and contempt. Irishmen had no great reason to be thankful to the House of Commons which had misgoverned their country for 105 years, but at the same time he would regard it as a disastrous thing for the people of this country if the House of Commons were to lose its prestige in their opinion, and especially at the hand of the Prime Minister, who ought to be its guardian and defender. But that was not his affair. When he was present at one of the discussions on the fiscal question a few weeks ago he saw a sight which struck him as unprecedented, scandalous, and, he might almost say, tragic. The House was discussing what was called an abstract Resolution, moved by a private Member. He observed, by the way, that there was no objection to an abstract Resolution by the hon. Member for Rochester when addressed, not to the head of the Government, but to the Leader of the Opposition, not to the great official hierarch of the country, but to a Gentleman, whatever his distinction and power, who was simply a private and unofficial Member of the House at the moment. Whatever might be the future of the hon. Member for Rochester, either as an orator or Parliamentarian, he had accomplished an achievement which he would never even approach again during the rest of his career. He made inevitable the Premiership of one man of this House when a change of Government came. He elicited a speech from the Leader of the Opposition which marked his position for ever. He did not think the hon. Member for Rochester did much harm to the cause of Home Rule. When Macaulay published his great "History of England," Croker, his literary and political enemy, wrote a slashing criticism of it. Sydney Smith's comment on that criticism was that the writer attempted murder but only succeeded in committing suicide. That was a fair description of the Motion and speech of the hon. Member for Rochester, because he plainly proved that the Liberal Party, speaking through its only leader in the House of Commons, and its future leader in the Government, was loyal, faithful, and true to the great principle of self-government for Ireland.

The Prime Minister was always making tremendous challenges to the Leader of the Opposition to move a vote of censure, but a Motion calling in question the fiscal policy of the Unionist Party was a vote of censure because that was the question on which the election within a few weeks, or months, must be fought. He was not going to say a word in derogation of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, but why was he at the head of the finances of the country while his predecessors the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol sat behind him, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon sat below the gangway? He was an extremely intelligent young gentleman, and he congratulated him on the extraordinary success with which the great principle of nepotism had placed him in the position he now occupied. But who would compare him with his predecessors as Chancellor of the Exchequer—the right hon. Member for West Bristol, and the right hon. Member for Croydon? Why was he on the Treasury Bench, and why were these right hon. Gentlemen on the benches behind? It was because the right hon. Gentleman on the Treasury Bench filling the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer was a protectionist, and because the right hon. Gentlemen on the benches behind him were free-traders. In other words the whole transformation in the Government of the country had been made because the head of the Government was determined to throw out the free-trade members of his Cabinet and to keep in the protectionist members. That was the reason why the Prime Minister ran away from the House when his policy was challenged.

He came now to the Irish policy of the Government. He saw the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland was now in his place. But he was often absent. Sometimes it was the wild delights of Punchestown steeplechases which called him away; sometimes he was drawn to the dining-room; and sometimes it was to don the courtly garments of a Grand Master of the Knight of St. Patrick. But, whatever might be the cause, they had been more accustomed to his absence than to his presence. He did not wish to be rude; but if the right hon. Gentleman were altogether absent there was not one Member of the Irish Party who would not be ready to join in a *Te Deum* on that account. What was the policy of the Government in regard to Irish affairs? They had not been left long to know what that policy was. The right hon. Gentleman the new Chief Secretary for Ireland had already developed two styles. The right hon. Gentleman was quite a modern painter on the Irish canvas when he had had only a short experience. He then belonged to the school of Sir Antony MacDonnell, his predecessor the right hon. Member for Dover, and the Prime Minister. That was, however, only in the early dawn of his occupation of his new office. But, in a few days the whole landscape was changed, that style disappeared, and the right hon. Gentleman came to this House and gave an Answer to a Question in which he not only unsaid all that he had said before, but took the trouble of pronouncing what, he must say, was a most ungenerous condemnation of the policy of his immediate predecessor in office. Now, there were many things in the administration of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover with which they, on those benches, could not agree, but not one of them would deny the generous principles and feelings with which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover had discharged his duty. That right hon. Gentleman had been the victim, not of his bad intentions towards Ireland, but of his good intentions; and whatever might be the faults of his administration—and they were many—certainly he did some things that would stand out in history to his credit, not merely when he was a member of the Irish Adminstration, but when as Under-Secretary for War he defended the indefensible. He considered that it was almost disloyal on the part of the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary to have made the pronouncement he had done against his predecessor when that right hon. Gentleman was away seeking recovery of the health which he had lost in the faithful discharge of his duties.

There was a very active agency in Ireland, although he did not think it was financed by the Government. But there was a fund to provide a subsidy to what he might call the reptile Press in that country. That agency was very active during the occupancy of the office of Chief Secretary by the right hon. Member for Dover. Whenever it was thought that the late Chief Secretary was inclined to be a little too sympathetic to Ireland, the anti-Irish reptile Press was in full blast, filling column after column in the English papers with bloodcurdling but fabricated stories of Ireland being the seething pot of disloyalty and crime. That agency was conducted, financed, and controlled by Irishmen. Of all the tragic things connected with the history of Ireland, the most tragic was that there was a section of Irishmen whose chief aim and purpose in life was to blacken the character and murder the reputation of their own country. Of all beings in the world there was none so contemptible as the Irish anti-Irishman. Such a creature was able to see unmoved the terrible tragedy of the destruction of an ancient and intelligent race by misgovernment and by emigration; to witness the population of his country reduced from nine to four and-a-half millions in a half century, and the country becoming one of the loneliest in the world, because only the old people were left, and the young and vigorous had gone away to other lands. He was not only unmoved by all this, but he was inspired by a contemptuous race hatred of the nation to which he nominally belonged. If anyone took up *The Times*, that hereditary enemy of Ireland, or the *Globe*, he would find column after column written evidently by some anti-Irish Irishman, and furnished by the agency of which he had spoken, giving full details and bloodcurdling descriptions of outrages in districts the reputation of which had been aforetime calumniated and was therefore suspect, but which the right hon. Gentleman the Attorney-General for Ireland had to acknowledge were untrue. If that hon. Gentleman could blacken Ireland then he would disclose the facts, but if they would clear her character he would keep them to himself.

He called attention to these things for two reasons, first because they were part of a campaign of calumny, and the second object was to get rid of Sir Antony MacDonnell. He made these observations for the purpose of warning the Chief Secretary that the idea was that if these campaigns were continued long enough, people would think Ireland was in a state of crime and disorder, and the right hon. Gentleman in consequence, like others before him, might be driven into coercing a country which was without crime. It might be that one of the byproducts of the success of that campaign would be that Sir Antony MacDonnell would relieve the Government of his inconvenient presence. He desired to warn him of this campaign, in which there was a well-organised and vast scheme, and in which there might be an attempt to create outrages in Ireland. That was a shocking thing to say, and he would never have said it if it had not been for the history of Sergeant Sheridan. If he wanted anything to prove the difference between the government of Ireland and England he would choose, as his best object-lesson, the case of Sergeant Sheridan on the one side and Adolf Beck on the other. Nothing was more creditable to this country than the outburst of almost tempestuous rage which swept the country at the conviction of an innocent man like Adolf Beck. Public opinion was so strong that it overbore the walls of officialism and forced an exposure of Home Office methods which was most extraordinary. No Government, he did not care from which Party it might have come, could have survived more than twenty-four hours if it had refused to do justice to Adolf Beck. He admired the spirit of the nation which was embodied in that feeling. But he turned from England to Ireland. Now, nobody could prove that Adolf Beck had been put in gaol by means of a conspiracy or wilful perjury; nobody could prove or attempt to prove that his wrongful conviction was the result of perjured evidence on the part of the police; and they could not prove that the crime of which he was convicted was committed by the policeman who gave the false evidence against him. All these things were elements in the case with which Sheridan was concerned, for the difference between the two cases was that Adolf Beck got £5,000 and poor McGowan got very little. Sheridan was allowed to leave for America, and the three or four scoundrels who assisted him in his crime were not only not punished, but some of them were still actually in the force which they had degraded and made unworthy of the confidence of the country. Yet there was not a ripple of anger in the public opinion of this country. How much better was it to be a Norwegian than an

Irishman. Adolf Beck was a Norwegian, and for his false imprisonment obtained from the Government of this country £5,000: poor McGowan was an Irishman, and his persecutors and perjurers were rewarded and acquitted. Once more they were brought face to face with the fact that the person who got least consideration from Englishmen, from the rulers of Ireland, was an Irishman.

He had indicated, from the pronouncements of the Chief Secretary, what they might expect his policy to be, but that was not the only indication which they had had. Years ago, in America, they had an expression in public life so coarse in its nature that he would apologise in anticipation for making use of it; but in the time of the Civil War, whenever the Republican Party were in want of a cry, they used to stir up all the old and bitter passions raised by the war by what was called "Waving the bloody shirt." When the present Government was at a loss for a policy, having run away from the policy of retaliation and protection, and wanted a cry, it had one refuge. It "waved the bloody shirt" of outrage in Ireland. It was a wicked policy, and it was almost criminal for a man in the position of the Prime Minister to resort to it. What did the right hon. Gentleman say? He said "We are united against Home Rule." The last word of the Prime Minister with regard to Ireland was that he was an opponent of Home Rule, and his very last word was redistribution. No one in England wanted redistribution, and the Government used the word redistribution as they used the word devolution, as a mask to conceal their faces. Their real desire was to reduce the Parliamentary representation of Ireland in that House, but until he saw it he would refuse to believe that one country could be so wicked and cruel as to reduce the representation of another country in that House on the ground of depopulation, when it was the hunger produced by their laws which had caused that depopulation.

*MR. ERNEST GRAY (West Ham, N.) said he desired to refer to a subject of urgent public importance, and had the information come to him at an earlier period of the session he should have felt compelled to move the adjournment of the House in order to raise an immediate discussion upon it. He wished to ask the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Board of Education, to whom he had given private notice that afternoon of his intention, whether he had received any information with regard to the action of the East Ham Borough Council on the previous evening. It was reported to him by the town clerk of West Ham, the adjoining borough, that on the previous night the Borough Council of East Ham resolved unaminously to no longer administer the Education Act of 1902. It appeared that the education committee of that council went to the East Ham Borough Council for a further grant out of public funds to enable them to carry out their duty in respect to the education of that district. The East Ham Borough Council resolved that they would not grant the money and instructed the education committee to dismiss the school teachers and close all the schools in the district as from the 31st of May next and to discontinue their duties as the education authority. Their object in so doing was to call attention to the large local rate in the borough for the discharge of what they considered was a national duty. Their action involved the future welfare of thousands of children, and a large staff of teachers and the whole education machinery for that borough. They took this action, not because they were averse to education, but because they found themselves utterly incapable with the local rate standing as it did of discharging their duty properly, and therefore they, by this very drastic act, had divested themselves of all responsibility, and he himself would not be surprised if other boroughs adopted the same policy at no distant date owing to the difficulty of meeting out of local funds national obligations. The adjoining borough of West Ham had now a rate of 2s. 8½d. in the £ for educational purposes, with every prospect of its being raised in the next half-year to 3s. 1d. This was due to the fact, not that they had been extravagant, but that they had had in less than thirty years to discharge all the responsibilities which were put upon them—responsibilities which other towns and cities had been given centuries to accomplish. In thirty years the population of the district he represented had grown from 30,000 to 300,000, and every single loan that they had borrowed for public purposes was still running. They had not had time to relieve themselves of those liabilities, and yet Parliament put further responsibilities on to them year by year until, unable to meet the responsibilities cast upon them, they were ready to tear up their Charter rather than increase the burden upon the people. It was not extravagance; and those who caused them to take this action, and those who said it was, knew nothing of the circumstances, and had not taken the trouble to inquire into them.

The East Ham Borough Council, which that day had taken this startling action, was the first of the authorities under the Act of 1892 to positively refuse to carry out their obligations with regard to education. Now, what were the Government going to do in this matter? The remedy provided by the Act was that of applying for a mandamus. Were the Government going to imprison the mayor and corporation of East Ham? He warned them if they did that there were forty or fifty other districts which they would have to serve in the same way, districts which had met a national obligation out of local rates. For thirty-five years Parliament had maintained a scheme of grants-in-aid to districts of this kind. By the Act of 1892 that was all swept away. The protest which he had made in that House passed almost unheeded, and the whole scheme of relief was swept away and a new one instituted, under which money was given to districts which did not require it, while others which greatly needed it were left to do the best they could to meet their difficulties. What were the Government going to do with regard to this matter? He felt it his duty to ask what information the Government had received with regard to it, and, above all, what steps they proposed to take to see that the education of the children was continued. When they met again they would be within four weeks of the date of the shutting up of these schools. He knew how the difficulty had gone on increasing in this borough; he had worked in the neighbourhood for thirteen years, and he knew how it had increased year by year until it became intolerable, and he appealed to the Government not to drive these people to desperation, and not to encourage others to follow the example thus set, but to recognise at once that they were face to face with a difficulty more serious than any he could recollect in connection with municipal government. If the action of the East Ham Borough Council was followed, as he was advised it would be, it would place the Government in a position of the greatest difficulty, and, if not met sympathetically and promptly, it would defy the best efforts of any Government to deal with it. It was under these circumstances that he asked his hon. friend the Secretary to the Board of Education what action he proposed to take.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.) said that he wished to answer one charge brought against him by the hon. Member for the Scotland Division—the charge of disloyalty to his predecessor in office. That charge he repudiated emphatically. It was founded on the allegation that in the second Answer to a Question he had unsaid all that he stated in the first Answer. That was grossly incorrect.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said that that was not his foundation for the charge of disloyalty against the right hon. Gentleman. The foundation was that the right hon. Gentleman had entirely repudiated the policy indicated in a statement made by the right hon. Member for Dover.

MR. WALTER LONG said that he was charged with disloyalty, then, because he stated as plainly as he could to the House that, as long as he remained Chief Secretary, he should consider himself responsible for all that was done in his Department, and that he intended to know all that was done by his subordinates. If he was to be condemned for that, he accepted condemnation. The second charge was that he had behaved disloyally to the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Dover. Was he disloyal to the right hon. Member for Dover because he declared that he was unable to accept what he understood to be his right hon. friend's description of the Under-Secretary's position—namely, that it was the position of a colleague and not of an ordinary member of the Civil Service? Neither his predecessor nor the Under-Secretary could hold that what he had said on that point was either disloyal or inaccurate in its description of the constitutional relations between the Chief Secretary and the Under-Secretary. He felt that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover did his best for the Government and the country, and therefore he was not likely to be disloyal to him in his absence.

SIR JOHN GORST said he desired to ask the counsel and the advice of the Secretary to the Board of Education in a case of difficulty with regard to the administration of the Education Act. It was the case of the village of Marston St. Lawrence, in Northamptonshire. In this and in many other villages in England there was great anxiety with respect to what might befall them under the Education Act. In this case the village school, which was built by a private owner, had been carried on for more than a generation as a Church school, and had now come under the control of the Northampton County Council for the purposes of secular education. It had been the custom in this school to take the children to church on certain days, and this custom had been continued by the present managers, who had control of the religious instruction. In order to comply with the law, the managers had kept the school open during the time the children were at church, and an assistant master was present to give secular instruction to any child who had been withdrawn from religious instruction. On Monday, March 27th, one of the county council's inspectors made his appearance at the school, turned out the children, closed the school altogether, and told the head teacher and the children to go to a school a mile away, and the assistant teacher to go to a school five miles away. The parents of the children were indignant at the school's being disturbed in this way. He wished to know what justification the county council had for a proceeding of this kind, a proceeding that had been threatened in other cases. He understood that their excuse for this high-handed proceeding was that the managers had disregarded a by-law which they had passed to the effect that the children should not be taken to church. He ventured to say that conduct of that kind was distinctly illegal. The Act provided that the managers should carry out any direction of the local authority as to secular education, but a direction that the children should not be taken to church could not be construed as a direction as to secular instruction. Moreover, he did not know that any power was given to a local authority to close a school. The only power that was given to them was, if the managers failed to carry out such a direction, to carry out the direction themselves as if they were the managers. The Act also provided that religious instruction given in a public elementary school not provided by a local education authority should be under the control of the managers. According to the Act the managers, and not the local education authority, had the control of the religious instruction. Therefore, the conduct of the local education authority was wrong in three particulars. In the first place, they had no right to make such a by-law; in the second place, if the by-law was valid, they had no right to close the school; and thirdly, theywere acting in direct defiance of the Act of Paliament which said that the control of religious instruction should be in the hands of the managers. This was a case that might occur in any village in the country. This was not a matter of religious sentiment. It was a matter of the observance of the law, and he wanted to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education what protection the managers of village schools had. These schools had been of very great use in the education of the country, and they were of very great use still. What protection had the managers if the local authority first of all made illegal by-laws, and then enforced them by methods that violated the Act of Parliament which gave to the managers he control of religious instruction in the schools?

*THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University) said he would first deal with the case referred to by the right hon. Gentleman. It was not the case that the local education authority of Northamptonshire made a by-law forbidding the children to go to church. The ordinary form of by-law required the children to be at school during the time that the school was open, and the local education authority announced that they were not prepared to regard attendance at church as attendance at school. They further said that if the children were to comply with that bye-law they would have to be at school during the whole time the school was open. They, however, adopted a new form of by-law which enabled the parents, after notice, to withdraw a child from the school during the period of religious instruction, and, therefore, there would be no difficulty whatever, if the parents desired it, in the children's attending church during the period of religious instruction without any violation of the by-laws. The local authority further announced that they were prepared to give ten days holiday in the year, on days of religious observance, in order that the children might be taken to church. But they did give a direction, which they were perfectly well entitled to give, that the school was to be opened at 9 o'clock, and that secular instruction was to begin at 9.45 and continue thenceforward until the end of the school session. What was done by the managers was in contravention of the direction of the local education authority as to secular instruction. On certain days they altered the time-table without reference to the local authority, and began secular instruction at 9 and continued it until 11, when they took the children to church. The managers were deaf to remonstrance, and at the beginning of March they were informed that at the end of the month the school would no longer be maintained by the local authority. So far everything was regular. But the inspector of the local authority was sent to the school to make arrangements for the teachers in the event of their desiring to leave, and he believed that what passed when the inspector visited the school exceeded the intention and the right of the local authority, and certainly the duty of the inspector, for he made an announcement to the children which was practically to the effect that the school was closed. The local authority had no right to close a school. They might refuse to maintain a school, and whether they were justified in doing so was a matter for the Board of Education to consider. In this case, the managers having violated the direction of the local authority in regard to secular education, the local authority would have been justified in refusing to maintain the school. But they were not justified in closing the school. Correspondence had been carried on which there was every reason to hope would result in an arrangement by which the managers would carry out the instructions of the local authority.

With regard to the question raised by the hon. Member for West Ham, the extreme gravity of which he quite admitted, he could only say that, as the facts had only just been brought to his notice, he could not be expected to suggest a remedy offhand; he could only say that he would be glad if the hon. Member would communicate with him on the subject, and it should receive the best attention of the Board of Education.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.) called attention to the notice which had been given to terminate the steamer service on the south-west coast of Ireland to which the Congested Districts Board had for several years generously given a subsidy, and pointed out that the carrying out of this proposal would put his constituency, and neighbouring constituencies, in an unfortunate position. The immediate result of terminating the steamer service would be to give the Great Southern and Western Railway Company a monopoly in the district. The charge he made was that the Congested Districts Board in the terms made with the railway company had not sufficiently safeguarded the interests of the people of the Sneem district. The Congested Districts Board had succeeded in getting some through rates, but these rates were 20 to 50 per cent. higher than used to be the case when the steamer service was in existence. This was an extremely serious matter, for in the district of Sneem the people had agreed to purchase their holdings at high figures. If, in addition to paying these high prices, they had to pay increased rates for transit, a very serious state of affairs would occur. The Congested Districts Board considered it a good stroke of business to have arranged with the railway company to put on a service of carts twice a week between Kenmare and the village of Sneem. That service would be inadequate to convey the goods formerly brought to the village by steamer. He found that cement which was previously carried at 7s. 6d. per ton would now cost 11s. 4d., and the rate for sugar would be increased from 11s. 6d. to 14s. 9d. If time permitted he could give more instances of the same kind. Owing to the defective state of Kenmare harbour, which was at present served by a steamer, the proprietors of that steamer had given notice that unless the harbour was improved the steamer would be withdrawn, and so the railway would have the monopoly of the service for the whole of that district.

Mr. WALTER LONG said he could only deal with this matter with the permission of the House. The facts in relation to the question raised by the hon. Gentleman were in dispute. The hon. Gentleman believed that the railway company had been able to establish a monopoly in the district, and had increased their rates. His information was that the railway company had not increased their rates, and that a monopoly had been prevented by the action of the Congested Districts Board. But if the hon. Gentleman would provide him with fuller details afterwards in support of the statement he had just made, he would look into the matter himself and see if anything could be done in the matter to rectify the grievance complained of. As to the dredging of Kenmare harbour, he was informed that that was a difficult and expensive operation and had only a temporary effect. The question raised by the hon. Member was a large one, and could not be dealt with by Answer across the floor of the House. He was anxious to do what he could to help the different traders in the district to get their produce to market, and any information the hon. Gentleman could furnish him with would be carefully considered.

Mr. MACVEAGH (Down, S.) said that the right hon. Gentleman had made a statement in regard to the new rules issued by the National Education Board of Ireland which was in many respects satisfactory. The right hon. Gentleman interpreted the understanding with the Treasury as meaning that no teachers would suffer loss under these new rules; but he thought that anyone who had studied the terms of the agreement would see that they did not bear out the rather wide interpretation which the Chief Secretary had made.

Mr. WALTER LONG said that what he had stated was that the National Board of Education, realising that the application of these rules in their strictest sense might lead to loss of income to certain teachers, desired to prevent any loss, and he thought that the hon. Gentleman would find that that would be the resut of the decision arrived at.

Mr. MACVEAGH said that what he asked for was the protection of the teachers of those schools who had not accepted the principle of amalgamation. The right hon. Gentleman must know that the rules had produced a great deal of discontent and unpopularity, and that many managers had announced that they did not intend to consent to amalgamation. He thought it would allay the discontent and uneasiness felt if they could get from the right hon. Gentleman a statement that this arrangement would apply to schools which did not accept amalgamation as well as to schools which did accept amalgamation. He understood that the right hon. Gentleman had no control over the National Board of Education, which was an absolutely irresponsible body and could bid defiance to the right hon. Gentleman and refuse to carry out his suggestions. He also understood that the right hon. Gentleman's recommendation to the Treasury had been treated with contempt. He believed that the right hon. Gentleman recognised that the discontent and uneasiness on the part of the teachers was perfectly natural and that the rights of all teachers should be safeguarded and that all should be treated alike. He hoped that the new rules would not be enforced until this matter had been made absolutely clear.

Mr. WALTER LONG said he would give the matter his best consideration.

Mr. NOLAN (Louth, S.) said he would like to draw attention to the very unfortunate state of affairs which had arisen in his constituency by the arbitrary action of the Local Government Board in Ireland, of which the right hon. Gentleman was the head. He had tried to draw attention to the matter before in the form of a Question, but, with all due respect to the right hon. Gentleman, he must complain that he had not received anything like a satisfactory Answer, although he did not complain of the right hon. Gentleman himself. What had occurred was that in one of three electoral divisions of the Poor Law District of Ardee the Local Government Board had stepped in owing to some dispute with regard to salaries and had suppressed one of the dispensaries, with the result that many poor people who required medical relief now had to travel eleven or twelve miles across country to obtain it, and the medical officer, when called upon, had to travel eleven or twelve miles to the patient. That was the state of affairs brought about deliberately by the pig-headed action of some of the officials of the Local Government Board, in spite of the strong protests of the board of guardians and every ratepayer in the district. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would look into this matter.

Mr. JOHN O'DONNELL (Mayo, S.) asked if the Chief Secretary for Ireland would use his holiday to inquire personally into the matter referred to by the hon. Member for South Down and to see whether all the managers of the schools were satisfied. There could be no doubt that the rules as they stood were detrimental; that was agreed by all and concurred in by the Bishops, whose opinion was not to be despised in this matter.

Mr. WALTER LONG: I have already said I will consider the matter.

Mr. NOLAN said he hoped when Parliament met again that the right hon. Gentleman would be able to take a wider view of the various subjects with which he had to deal.

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, "That this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, May 2nd."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

Adjourned accordingly at twenty-seven minutes after Seven o'clock, till Tuesday, May 2nd.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 2nd May, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. SPEAKER, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Aylesbury Gas Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Cordoba and Rosario Railway Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

Ealing Corporation Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Entre Rios Railways Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

South Oxfordshire Water and Gas Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Andover Lighting and Power Bill. As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

Bristol Corporation Bill; Croydon Corporation Bill; Rotherham, Maltby, and Laughton Railway Bill; South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Company Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Barry Railway Bill [Lords]; Clacton Improvement Bill [Lords]; Commercial Union Assurance Bill [Lords]; East Cowes Gas Bill [Lords]; Leeds and Liverpool Canal Bill [Lords]; Mortgage Insurance Corporation Bill [Lords]; Preston Corporation (Ribble Navigation) Bill [Lords]; Rhymney Railway Bill [Lords]; Southend and Colchester Light Railways Bill [Lords]; Truro Water Bill [Lords]; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

PETITIONS.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (GENERAL POWERS) BILL.

Petition for additional Provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (TRAMWAYS) BILL.

Petition for additional provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

HOUSE LETTING (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition of Scottish Trade Protection Society, against; to lie upon the Table.

LANDS VALUATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition of Scottish Trade Protection Society, against; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Airdrie; Anderston; Annan; Arbroath (two); Bothwell (two); Brechin; Butterburn; Cambuslang; Castletown; Cleland; Cowcaddens; Cromarty; Culbokie; Dingwall; Dundee (nine); Dunfermline; Edinburgh; Fortrose; Glasgow (four); Greenock (three); Innerleithen; Inverness; Kilwinning; Kirkwall; Lochans; Lochee; Maxwelltown; Montrose (two); Morrison; Motherwell (two); Nairn (two); Newarthill; Newton; Peebles; Scottish Permissive Bill and Temperance Association; Tain; Thornton; Troqueer; Uddingston; and Wick; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petition from St. Mabe, against; to lie upon the Table.

TRADES UNIONS AND TRADE DISPUTES BILL.

Petition of Scottish Trade Protection Society, against; to lie upon the Table.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS (RECESS).

The following Papers, presented by Command of His Majesty during the Easter Recess, were delivered to the Librarian of the House of Commons during the Recess, pursuant to the Standing Order of the 14th August, 1896:—

1. Trade Reports (Annual Series). Copies of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3346 to 3353.

2. Treaty Series (No. 13, 1905). Copy of Convention between the United Kingdom and Japan respecting Commercial Relations between Japan and India. Signed at Tokio, 29th August, 1904. Ratifications exchanged at Tokio, 15th March, 1905.

3. Explosions (Eley's Factory at Edmonton, Middlesex). Copy of Report by Captain J. H. Thomson, His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Explosives, to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on the circumstances attending an explosion of collodion cotton which occurred at the Factory of Messrs. Eley Brothers, Limited, at Edmonton, Middlesex, on the 7th March, 1905.

4. Factory and Workshop (Laundries). Copy of List of Religious and Charitable Institutions in which Laundries are carried on.

5. Board of Education (Special Reports). Copy of Special Reports on Educational Subjects, Vol. 15. School Training for the Home Duties of Women. Part I. The Teaching of Domestic Science in the United States of America.

6. Underfed Children at Public Elementary Schools. Copy of Circulars issued in April, 1905, by the Local Government Board and the Board of Education as to the cases of children attending public elementary schools who are without adequate nourishment,

7. Lunacy (Scotland). Copy of Forty-seventh Annual Report of the General Board of Commissioners in Lunacy for Scotland.

8. Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887 (Eviction Notices). Copy of Return of Eviction Notices filed during the quarter ended 31st March, 1905.

9. Agrarian Offences (Provinces) (Ireland). Copy of Return by Provinces of Agrarian Offences in Ireland for the year ended 31st December, 1904.

10. Education (Ireland). Copy of Annual Report of the Commissioners of Education in Ireland for the year 1904.

Ordered, That the said Papers do lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Fourth Annual General Report of the Department, 1903–4 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CONTEMPT OF COURT (IRELAND) (PERSONS COMMITTED).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 14th March; *Mr. McHugh*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 138.]

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND) COMMISSIONERS (MEETINGS, ETC.).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 12th April; *Mr. Timothy M. Healy*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 139.]

PHARMACY (IRELAND) ACTS, 1875 TO 1890.

Copy presented, of Order in Council, dated 22nd April, 1905, approving of Regulations made by the Pharmaceutical Society [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3354 to 3358 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (MISCELLANEOUS SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Miscellaneous Series, No. 633 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

FREE AND UNITED FREE CHURCHES (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Interim Report of the Departmental Commission on the Free and United Free Churches, Scotland, to the Secretary for Scotland by Sir John Cheyne, K.C. [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

MINES AND QUARRIES.

Copy presented, of Reports of His Majesty's Inspectors of Mines for the year 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

WELLINGTON COLLEGE.

Copy presented, of Report of the Governors of Wellington College for the year ending 31st December, 1904, with Accounts [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS (GREAT BRITAIN).

Copy presented, of Forty-eighth Report of His Majesty's Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools for 1904. Part I. List of Schools and Detailed Reports [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

MINES (FATAL ACCIDENTS).

Return presented, relative thereto (Address 28th March; *Mr. Fenwick*); to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 140.]

METROPOLITAN POLICE.

Accounts presented, of the Metropolitan Police and the Police Pension Funds for the year ended 31st March, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 141.]

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).

Copy presented, of a Licence to be at large granted to Harry Tate, to which are annexed Conditions other than those contained in Schedule A of The Penal Servitude Act, 1864 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE (FOREIGN AND COLONIAL POST).

Copy presented, of the Foreign and Colonial Post Amendment (No. 9) Warrant, 1904, dated 31st December, 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE (INLAND POST).

Copy presented, of the Inland Post Amendment (No. 1) Warrant, 1904, dated 7th December, 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS).

Copy presented, of the Postal Order (Inland) Amendment (No. 2) Regulations, 1905, dated 17th April, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE (FOREIGN AND COLONIAL POST).

Copy presented, of the Foreign and Colonial Post Amendment [No. 10) Warrant, 1905, dated 31st March, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TRANSVAAL AND ORANGE RIVER COLONY.

Copy presented, of Further Correspondence relating to Affairs in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

COLONIES (REPRESENTATIVE INSTITUTIONS).

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 7th March; *Dr. Macnamara*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 142.]

GAS COMPANIES (METROPOLIS).

Copy presented, of Accounts of the Metropolitan Gas Companies for the year 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 143.]

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Copy presented, of Draft Amending Order No. 1 of the Board of Education, amending Final Order No. 391, under Section 11 (8) of The Education Act, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 144.]

COMPANIES (WINDING-UP) ACT, 1890.

Account presented, showing Receipts and Expenditure on account of Proceedings during the year ended 31st March, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 145.]

BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883 (PROCEEDINGS).

Account presented, showing the Receipts and Expenditure on account of Bankruptcy Proceedings during the year ended 31st March, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 146.]

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 10th April, 1905, granting a retired allowance to John Bolton, late of the Engineer in Chief's Department, General Post Office, under the Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

1. Thames Conservancy. General Report and Accounts of the Conservators for 1904 [by Act]; to be printed. [No 147.]

2. Public Records (Fines and Recoveries). Copy of Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes of Documents connected with the Alienation of Land by means of Fines and Recoveries, which are now in the Public Record Office, but are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation therein [by Act].

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Election of Dublin University Board—Roman Catholic Representatives.

DR. THOMPSON (Monaghan, N.): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will consider the advisability of so altering the constitution of the University of Dublin that the Board of that Institution shall be elected by the Junior Fellows and Professors, and that the principle of co-option may also be adopted, so as to permit of the immediate election of a certain specified number of Roman Catholics on the governing authority.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) Legislation would be necessary to give effect to this proposal, and this is not contemplated by His Majesty's Government.

Scotch Congested Districts Board—Power to Raise Money on the Security of Land already Purchased.

MR. AINSWORTH (Argyllshire): To ask the Lord-Advocate whether he will consider the advisability of giving power to the Congested Districts Board (Scotland) to raise money on the security of land already purchased with the object of providing funds for further land purchase.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) The Secretary for Scotland is desirous of extending the effective power of the Congested Districts Board in the sense indicated by the hon. Member, and the matter is now under his consideration.

Excesses in Average Salaries of Elementary School Teachers—Contributions to Deferred Annuity Fund.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH (Bristol, W.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury what excesses in the average salaries of certificated elementary school teachers in Great Britain, above £119 13s. 3d. in the case of men and £76 11s. 9d. in the case of women, have been from time to time certified by the Education Department to the Treasury since the passing of the Teachers Superannuation Act of 1898; what increases of the ratio of contribution to the deferred annuity fund of £3 in the case of men and £2 in the case of women have been made in consequence of such excesses; and what are the present average salaries and rates of contribution to the deferred annuity fund in the case of men and women teachers respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) (1) The following excesses in the average salaries of certificated elementary school teachers in Great Britain above £119 13s. 3d. in the case of men, and £76 11s. 9d. in the case of women, have been certified by the Education Departments to the Treasury since the passing of the Teachers Superannuation Act of 1898, viz.:—

English teachers:—

	£	s.	d.
Men (1902–3) .	11	19	9
Women (1899–1900)	8	17	4

Scotch teachers:—

	£	s.	d.
Men (1898–1900) .	23	2	7
Men (1900–1) .	26	7	8
Women . .	no excess		

(2) The following increases have been made in the teachers' contributions to the deferred annuity fund in consequence of the above excesses, viz. :—

English teachers :—

Men, 5s. from 1st April, 1905.
Women, 4s. from 1st April, 1901.

Scotch teachers :—

Men, 5s. from 1st April, 1901.
† Men, 10s. from 1st April, 1902.

(3) The present average salaries of elementary school teachers, and their rates of contribution to the deferred annuity fund are, according to the latest returns, as follows, viz. :—

English teachers :—

	Salary.			Contribution.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Men .	134	10	11	3	5	0
Women	89	11	1	2	4	0

Scotch teachers :—

	Salary.			Contribution.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Men .	149	12	7	3	10	0
Women	75	17	5	2	0	0

Salaries and Fees of Law Officers of the Crown.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he can state the amounts paid in salaries and fees to the Law Officers of the Crown during the financial year ending March 31st, 1905.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The fees (including the clerks' fees) paid to the Law Officers for the year in question were as follows—

Attorney-General :—	£	s.	d.
Salary . .	7,000	0	0
Fees . .	5,993	14	4
	12,993	14	4
Solicitor-General :—			
Salary . .	6,000	0	0
Fees . .	3,748	17	3
	9,748	17	3

Assistant Clerks in the Civil Service.

MR. REDDY (King's County, Birr): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury how many assistant clerks (recruited from competition among boy clerks and boy copyists) are at present in the Civil Service, and how many of these in the Statistical Office, Custom House, London.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The number of certificates granted from competitions (limited and open among boy clerks, boy copyists, and ex-boy clerks and ex-boy copyists) as assistant clerks of the abstractor class was, up to February last, 1,806 for all departments. The number of assistant clerks serving in the Statistical Office of the Customs is 109.

Assistant Clerks in the General Register and Record Office of Shipping.

MR. REDDY: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will state what proportion the assistant clerks employed in the General Register and Record Office of Shipping and Seamen bear to the whole staff; how many of these are eligible for promotion to the second division; and how many of them have been promoted; whether the Treasury will consider the advisability of extending the allowances of £20 granted to abstractors (old class) in this office in 1898 to the assistant clerks (new class), seeing that they are performing the same work for which the allowances were originally granted and that their initial salary is considerably smaller.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The proportion of the assistant clerks in this Department to the total staff is as 36 is to 59. Seventeen assistant clerks are qualified, as regards length of service, for promotion to the second division. Since 1898 six vacancies have occurred in the second division, and have been filled by promotion from the assistant clerk class. The allowances, to which the hon. Member refers in the last part of his Question, were granted specially to certain officers, and I am not prepared to extend them.]

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† *i.e.* A further 5s., making 10s. altogether.

Classification of Battleships.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can state what reasons exist for counting as first-class battleships the "Collingwood," of 9,500 tons, launched in 1882, and classed in a Parliamentary Return of the present session as of comparatively small fighting value, a French ship of 10,000 tons launched in 1879, the Italian "Duilio," and H.M.S. "Sans Pareil," thus giving an appearance of greater strength to the British, French, and Italian Fleets, as compared with those of Germany, Japan, and the United States.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) Return No. 96 gives a list of all ships under their respective classes, and so long as a vessel remains on the fighting list at all it is difficult to depart from this classification. The relative fighting value of the various ships may, however, be roughly assessed by their precedence on that list, or, more accurately, by reference to the table giving the date of launch, tonnage, and armaments. In the case of foreign ships the Return follows the classification adopted by the countries concerned; but the inference suggested in the hon. Member's Question would hardly be drawn when it is remembered that Germany, Japan, and the United States have no large battleships of an earlier date than 1893.

Inspection of Lightships, etc., by Night—The Tender "Signal."

MAJOR JAMESON (Clare, W.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he will state if the Trinity House view their lights afloat after dark or only during daylight; and, with reference to the statement of the Commissioners of Northern Lights to the Mercantile Marine Committee that the tender "Signal," constructed entirely under the Board of Trade, had turned out an unsatisfactory and in some respects a dangerous vessel for taking a boat alongside on a bad day, will he state under what circumstances this vessel came to be constructed, what she cost, who built her, what she was for, how long she was used, what became of her, and whether steps will be taken to obtain the assistance of Lloyds or other skilled unofficial assistance in designing vessels to prevent a repetition of such an occurrence.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) I am informed by the Trinity House that occasional night inspections are made of all the light-stations under their charge, and that, in addition to this, it is the invariable practice for Committees of the Elder Brethren, when afloat, to view after dark the lights in their immediate vicinity. I am informed by the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses that the "Signal" was built in 1883 by Messrs. Caird & Co., of Greenock, at a cost of £15,223. That she was engaged on general lighthouse work on the West Coast of Scotland, making the reliefs at rock stations, attending to the buoyage of the district, charging buoys and beacons with gas, removing wrecks, etc., and that she was in constant use until September, 1895, when she was wrecked on the Mull of Kintyre during a dense fog. The Commissioners state that they will be prepared, with the approval of the Board of Trade, to obtain such skilled assistance in designing any vessels they may require in the future as the particular circumstances of the case may render expedient. There is nothing in the Report of the Court which investigated the loss of the "Signal" to suggest that it was in any way due to defective designs, and I am afraid that the utmost skill in designing would not render a vessel immune from running on a rock during a dense fog.

Income-Tax deducted from Pensions of Officers of His Majesty's Forces.

MR. MARKS (Kent, Thanet): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he can state the amount of income-tax received by the Exchequer during the years 1902–3 and 1903–4 in respect of payments on incomes derived from pensions awarded to officers of His Majesty's Forces.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) I understand the hon. Member to ask for a statement of the amount of income-tax deducted from retired pay and half-pay of Army and Navy Officers during the years 1902–3 and 1903–4. The figures are as follows—

Army.

	1902–3			1903–4		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Retired pay	80,748	6	5	70,932	2	0
Half-pay . .	3,865	6	0	3,444	8	5

Navy.

	1902–3			1903–4		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Retired pay .	33,338	9	9	27,351	11	0
Half-pay .	2,631	16	3	2,374	5	9

Meetings of Commissioners of National Education in Ireland.

Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of meetings of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland held during each of the three years 1902, 1903, and 1904; the number of meetings of same body held in each of the three calendar years immediately preceding the death of Mr. Redington, late Resident Commissioner of National Education; the number of meetings of same body held in each of the three calendar years immediately preceding the death of Sir Patrick Keenan, Resident Commissioner of National Education.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The numbers of meetings held in the years named were as follows—

Year.	No. of Meetings.
1902	26
1903	31
1904	38

The numbers of meetings held in the three calendar years immediately preceding the death of Mr. Redington (who died on the 4th February, 1899) were—

Year.	No. of Meetings.
1896	49
1897	40
1898	40

The numbers of meetings held in the three calendar years immediately preceding the death of Sir Patrick Keenan (who died on 1st November, 1894) were—

Year.	No. of Meetings.
1891	40
1892	43
1893	47

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Armour Plate for the Navy.

Mr. J. F. HOPE (Sheffield, Brightside): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can state approximately when any further orders for armour plate will be issued by the Admiralty.

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge): Orders for armour are placed as necessary to keep pace with the requirements of ships under construction The next orders will probably be out in about two months.

Volunteer Capitation Grants.

Major EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): On behalf of the hon. Member for South Derbyshire, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he proposes to make any alteration during the current year in the amounts or conditions of Volunteer Capitation Grants; and if there will be any alteration in the same period of the camp allowances set down in the present Volunteer Regulations.

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.): As regards the amounts or conditions of Volunteer Capitation Grants there will be no alterations during the current year. As regards camp allowances for the present year only attendance at camp is not compulsory to earn the higher efficiency grant, and Class I. allowances will be admissible for a Class I. camp even though the minimum number of members, required by the regulations to attend, is not secured. The allowances and conditions for Field Army battalions, including the minimum number to attend camp, remain unaltered.

Military Headgear.

*Colonel LEGGE (St. George's, Hanover Square): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if the issue of the new field service forage cap for the Army has been finally approved of; has a new pattern cap for walking out and similar purposes been decided upon;

and, if so, what saving, if any, will result from these changes.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The new service dress cap for the Army has not been finally approved. Two patterns, similar in shape but different in detail, are this year being issued as an experiment. A new cap for walking out purposes has been decided upon, but the pattern has not yet been finally approved. It is impossible to say what saving will be effected until the pattern of the walking out cap has been finally decided, but there will be no extra cost.

Inebriate Homes.

MR. PURVIS (Peterborough): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can state the number of homes established under the Inebriates Acts, 1898 and 1899; what is the present capacity of such homes; and the total number of inmates on 31st March last.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): Under the Inebriates Acts, 1898 and 1899, two State inebriate reformatories, and twelve certified inebriate reformatories, had been established prior to the 31st March last. These institutions contained 1,112 available beds and 876 inmates on the date mentioned. Two hundred of the unoccupied beds were in newly established institutions. Another certified reformatory, with accommodation for eighty persons, has just been opened. Besides these reformatories, which are for persons committed from the Courts, there are nineteen retreats licensed under the Habitual Drunkards Act, 1879, which provide accommodation for 544 voluntary cases.

Immigration of Aliens.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that some doubt exists as to the eight ports at which it is intended to appoint immigration officers and to which the landing of immigrants under the Aliens Bill, should it become law, is to be confined; and whether (in addition to Leith, the Tyne, Hull, Grimsby, Southampton, and London) Harwich and Hartlepool are to be included and Dover and Newhaven to be excluded from the list.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: In introducing the Bill, I stated that it was proposed to deal, in the first instance, with the organised immigration traffic, 97 per cent. of which comes to eight ports extending from Leith to Southampton. The eight ports I had in my mind were, as may be seen by looking at the Board of Trade Returns, London, Grimsby, Hull, Newhaven, Southampton, the Tyne, Leith, and Harwich; but power is reserved to strike out ports from this list or to add ports to it as may be found desirable.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Is Folkestone included.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: There are practically none of these immigrants coming viâ Folkestone.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby): Is Liverpool included?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: No Sir, but perhaps I may be allowed to deal with these matters in debate. I have said that some extra machinery may be required to deal with aliens who have been rejected in America and may come back here.

The Quadrant, Regent Street.

MAJOR EVANS GORDON: On behalf of the hon. Member for South Derbyshire, I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if plans have been prepared for the new buildings to be erected at the Regent Street Quadrant by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests; and if the elevations can be exhibited in the Tea Room.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.): Drawings for the new buildings about to be erected in the Regent Street Quadrant are in course of preparation, and there will be no objection to exhibit a copy of the Quadrant elevation as soon as the drawings are complete.

Royal Commission on Sewage Disposal.

MR. J. F. HOPE: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what has been the total cost to date of the Royal Commission on Sewage Disposal.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: The total cost of the Royal Commission on Sewage Disposal up to the 31st March last amounted to £35,362.

Report of Royal Commission on Sewage Disposal.

MR. J. F. HOPE: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board when the Royal Commission on Sewage Disposal is likely to issue its final Report.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GRANT LAWSON, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk): I am informed that the Commission hope to issue a Report this year dealing with the relative merits of different methods of sewage disposal and certain other questions. I understand, however, that it cannot be stated at present when the final Report will be issued.

Irish School Fees.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): On behalf of the hon. Member for North Belfast, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that the school fees charged and collected by the teachers in ordinary national schools in Ireland are allocated among the teachers in each school where collected, whereas the fees collected in model schools, and which are purely local contributions, have to be remitted to the Treasury; and will he take steps to place the teachers in both classes of schools on the same footing.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): The facts are substantially as stated. The suggestion in the latter part of the Question is under consideration.

Scottish Education Bill.

MR. H. LAWSON (Tower Hamlets, Mile End): On behalf of the hon. Member for East Renfrewshire, I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when he proposes to proceed with the Scottish Education Bill.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I hope to be able to take the next stage of this Bill next week.

The Scottish Ecclesiastical Difficulty.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when the measure required for the purpose of meeting the ecclesiastical difficulty in Scotland will be introduced.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is not very easy for me to answer the Question with precision, because we only had the Report in our hands a few days before the House separated for the holidays. Although I have been in communication by letter with my right hon. friend the Lord-Advocate on the subject in the course of the holidays, it has been impossible for us to meet and we are not therefore in a position at this moment to lay on the Table our proposals to deal with this matter, which is one of undoubted urgency, but the difficulty of which is equally obvious. I hope to be able to do so at a very early date.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As I am on the subject of business may I state that I propose to go on with the Report of the Budget Resolutions on Wednesday, and on Thursday Class I. of Supply, Civil Services, not including the Irish Votes, will be taken. On Monday I think we ought to take the vote of censure to be proposed by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. On Thursday week I hope to take the Vote in Supply dealing with the Defence Committee.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: With regard to the notice of Motion which I gave touching the Administration of Ireland I see no objection on my part to taking it next Monday, but there are others interested and I cannot speak for them.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): Is the right hon. Gentlemen satisfied that the right hon. Member for Dover will be able to be present on Monday, As he is the person most directly concerned he certainly ought to be present.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope so, but if my right hon. friend's health prevents I grant that there may be a reason for postponing the vote of censure.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): Has the right hon. Gentleman yet fixed a date for the Second Reading of the Unemployed Bill?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir.

The Telephone Agreement.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE: I desire to ask the Postmaster - General (or, in his absence, the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury) if there is any objection to adding two members to the Telephone Transfer Committee—one of the added members to be a Labour Member?

*The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Sir A. Acland-Hood, Somersetshire, Wellington): I am sorry I cannot answer the Question. I have had no opportunity of conferring with my right hon. friend, but the matter may perhaps be arranged. I will inquire.

NEW BILL.

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS) BILL.

"To extend certain provisions of the Post Office (Money Orders) Acts to the Money Orders transmitted to and from Foreign States and British Protectorates," presented by Lord Stanley; supported by Mr. Victor Cavendish; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 190.]

ALIENS BILL.

[Second Reading.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): Since the last occasion on which we discussed this Bill a new light has been thrown upon its future, if we are to take the statement made in the country by a leading member of the Cabinet. This Secretary of State told his constituents that the Government could not dissolve yet because it was necessary for them first to pass this measure. If we might take it that a dissolution will take place as soon as the Government have succeeded in carrying this measure, then I think a great many Members on this side of the House would be inclined to facilitate rather than throw difficulties in its way. Undoubtedly, to give the country an opportunity to discuss both this Bill and its history and the whole policy of the Government is a matter so important that we should almost welcome an immediate dissolution, even if the Bill had to be passed as it stands. Personally, the opportunity which I have had with some others who have looked into this question and studied the provisions of this Bill, makes me as determined for my part to divide the House against its Second Reading as I was in respect of the Bill of last year.

The case for this Bill is one which rests upon, no doubt unwilling, misrepresentation—but such complete misrepresentation of the facts and the figures which have been laid before us by the Government, that I shall have to ask the indulgence of the House while I go into those facts and figures, and even into quotations from Government documents, a process which we all abhor. It is necessary to prove the case on figures, because the misrepresentation—innocent no doubt—which is going on is stupendous. It is undoubtedly the belief of many Gentlemen opposite, and it is the belief of the Press that support this Bill, that there is an enormous immigration of aliens into this country for settlement here and that it has been increasing for years. [Sir Howard Vincent (Sheffield, Central): Hear, hear.] The hon. and gallant Member cheers that statement, but, as a matter of fact, I am prepared to show that there has been a falling off in the alien population of this country within the last two years, and I will show that on Government facts alone. Of course, the Home Secretary is personally innocent in this matter. No one in this House would think that he would place before the House any figures upon which he did not himself rely. But he has been the means of misleading the Press and the constituencies, because he has supplied the House with figures given him by other Government Departments. I shall show that he has been misled in the figures he has placed before the House, and upon which he really based his case. The words he used were these. He said the matter is "extremely pressing," and that it has "become more acute," and he pointed to the increasing immigration for settlement in this country. He said there were 82,000 persons, not described as *en route*, remaining, after seamen were deducted, of whom the greater proportion stayed here for settlement. I take it that these are the 82,000 that are referred to in the Report issued to us yesterday. This figure cannot be gathered from the monthly Reports, so I suppose the right hon. Gentleman or his secretary must have asked the Board of Trade what were the figures for last year corresponding to the figures of the previous year.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): They are from the monthly Returns.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: They cannot be gathered from the monthly Returns. What the right hon. Gentleman said was that the number last year not so described—that is as being *en route*—was 82,000 after a deduction had been made for sailors, and he used the words—

> "The greater proportion of them come here to settle"

—of the 82,000, the House will observe. The Emigration and Immigration Report distributed to us yesterday makes a directly opposite statement; it says that the majority are not immigrants in the sense of prospective settlers. It is curious that this same word is used in an important document contained in the Report of the Royal Commission. The secretary of that Commission in what was called Question 21,713 used the word "settled," and used it as the Board of Trade have used it in the Return issued yesterday, showing that these people do not come here to settle, and that they do not settle. From the 82,000, besides the deduction for sailors which the Home Secretary made, there are other deductions which obviously have to be made. That is admitted by the Report. On direct inquiries made with respect to the Port of London it was found that a large number of persons—thousands I may say—not returned as being *en route* were in fact *en route*. Of course there must also be deducted from the number who settled all those that are sent on again by the Jewish Board of Guardians and other charitable organisations. Of these there were many thousands who are described as "leaving the country subsequently." The Home Secretary, on the contrary, told the House that the greater proportion of the 82,000 had settled in this country; in other words, that over 41,000 had been added to the alien population of this country during the course of the year 1904. That, I imagine, is the Home Secretary's statement. Last year he made the case for the Bill that there was a large and rapid increase in alien immigration to this country. What he said was that last year the immigration had increased very rapidly. Had it? What was the judgment of the Board of Trade stated in last year's Report? That Report stated that the real addition in 1903 was considerably less than in 1902. Not an increase but a diminution, and a diminution shown by them to be so great that it is impossible to make out that a thousand persons on the balance remained in this country. In 1903 there was practically no addition at all in the alien population. That was the official information of the Board of Trade.

Now what is the alien population? A portion of it must continually increase. Take, for instance, the motor industry, and look at the number of foreign chauffeurs. That industry has brought in an enormous number of new alien population. These men come in as third-class passengers by Newhaven, though they go out again, having made their fortunes, it is said, as first or second-class passengers. They are included in this alien immigration as third-class passengers. These figures were gone into most carefully before the Royal Commission. It was official evidence. Mr. Llewellyn Smith, on behalf of the Board of Trade, conducted this inquiry, and made this Return, and he is responsible for the Return which came to us yesterday. Question 34, put to the representative of the Board of Trade as regarded aliens not described as *en route*, elicited the reply that the Board of Trade have taken steps to ascertain the actual facts with regard to London. The result of that statement having been throughly gone into, Mr. Hawkey was called before the Royal Commission. He was the examining officer of Customs, but worked directly for the Board of Trade in these investigations. Mr. Hawkey told the Royal Commission in answer to Question 890 that many "pay their fare to America in Russia" (he afterwards added Germany, "and do not receive through tickets."

Question 891—

> "What do they receive ?—Simply the address of an agent in London."

Question 892—

> "They have to land in London to go to the agent ?—Yes, to get the through ticket to America . . . "

> "These people go by the Beaver Line from Liverpool . . . unless they change their names and go by other lines."

Now this was the state of things before last year, and I shall have to allude to the state of things last year which intensified what was described before the Royal Commission. Mr. Hawkey was recalled upon the point of this through traffic, and explained that a large number of persons whom the Home Secretary believed settled in this country were only *en route*. In answer to Question 1334 he made this statement—

> "I am largely deceived as to destination."

Question 1335—

> "Which way ?—If they are going further—to America."

Question 1336—

> "Do they say they are going on ?—They say they are not going on."

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Question 1337—

> "When they are really going on ?—Yes, in large numbers they do that."

Question 1339—

> "What is the object ?—The agents to whom they pay their fares to America enjoin on them that they are not to tell that they are going on to America."

The hon. and gallant Member for Stepney was present at the examination, and it was he who finally brought out the facts. In answer to him (No. 1431) Mr. Hawkey said—

> "The German companies have ships to America and these passengers might go by their ships. Therefore they object to their coming through. Arrangements were come to with the English companies not to book foreign passengers who had not resided six weeks in the United Kingdom."

So that the hon. Member rejoined—

> "That is what I wanted to get at."

It is indeed the crux of the whole question. The argument is enormously strengthened by what occurred in 1904. In answer to Questions 1437 and 1438, the witness said—

> "The Beaver Line are not in this agreement ? It takes passengers to America independently of their stay in the United Kingdom. No other company does that professedly."

To Question 1457 Mr. Hawkey replied—

> "If he books through from Germany to America the fare is more than if he books first from Germany to England, and then from England to America."

That is really the explanation of the whole thing. This statement was confirmed by the secretary to the Royal Commission in the document to which I have alluded. Is what the Home Secretary stated the other day or what the Board of Trade stated the true account ? In Question 21,713 it was asked—

> "Are we to conclude that a largely increased number of immigrants from the German ports do come to settle, or that we still retain a large proportion for the through traffic ?"

The witness replied—

> "The latter. To retain this trade evasion is necessary."

That trade is, of course, a very large trade in this country, and if this Bill is to be passed and to work, its effect will be to kill or greatly to hamper that through trade.

I now turn to the special circumstances of 1904, which I say greatly strengthen the argument against the Home Secretary's facts and figures. The House will find in the Emigration Return circulated yesterday an allusion to the cheap fares in 1904 from England—not from Germany—to the United States chiefly from London but partly from Liverpool. In the Emigration Report these words are used—

> "the great lowering of passenger rates by the Transatlantic steamship companies for several months in 1904 in pursuance of a rate war."

I have ascertained the actual facts with regard to this rate war, and they are facts which affect the whole of the figures of last year and which entirely change the case—and change it enormously—against the views of the Home Secretary since our debates of last year. The rate war began in May of 1904 and it was begun by four great emigrant companies—the Red Star, the Holland-America, the Hamburg-America and the Norddeutscher-Lloyd reducing their fares from London to New York to £2. The fare from Germany to New York remained at 120 marks average—an enormously higher rate. This was for the purpose of cutting out the Beaver Line, and it had the opposite effect. The result was that an enormous traffic grew up from Germany to England of emigrants who passed on at these cheap rates. All the other lines followed suit more or less—they all reduced their fares greatly from London and Liverpool to the United States, and the rate war lasted in its full severity until September, and in the middle of September several of the lines raised their fares again, including three of the original lines; some remained at the low fares, and the White Star Line suddenly lowered their fares from England to America for several weeks to £2. All that time the rates to New York from Continental ports remained up at the old high figures, and the result was an enormous increase of transmigration of aliens who are not described as being *en route*. Those are the special facts as regards 1904. How in the face of these facts and the Government Report can the Home Secretary tell the House and the country that the problem has become more acute? Here are the words of the Report of yesterday comparing 1904 with 1903—

> "The recorded balance inward from Europe . . . is only about 1,000 in excess of the recorded net balance outwards of foreign emigrants from the United Kingdom to places out of Europe. In 1903 the corresponding excess was 19,000. . . . The proportion borne by the inward to the outward stream has diminished."

That is the Government Report. Yes, but was there really an addition? Was there really an addition of 19,000 in the previous year to the population of the United Kingdom? Not at all. The Government's calculation was that there was an addition of about 1,000 to the alien population of the United Kingdom in 1903, and therefore if we are 19,000 better off this year on the balance than we were last year the result would be a diminution of the alien population by 18,000 in the year 1904. What has happened in the last two years is that the alien population has decreased, but that the alien traffic has enormously increased. And the facts and figures from various alien exporting ports are eloquent upon that point. In the Emigration Report the House will find the special report of our Consul-General at Hamburg, who there says—

> "Of the total number" (133,000) "of emigrants who embarked at Hamburg, 15,546 embarked for the United Kingdom as against 11,010 persons in 1903."

That enormous increase is caused by the lowering of the fares, because it is not pretended that there was an increase, but a decrease on the total figures for the year, although the details are made up in this way by an increase of the through traffic. I have, I think, detained the House too long, but it was necessary to go into these figures to show by what a preposterous mistake—of course, on the part of the Home Secretary unintentional—this false impression has been produced.

What I shall have to say about the Bill on other points will be short this year as compared with what I have said on the figures, because the figures are the main portion of the case—the special portion of the case—which is, comparatively speaking, new; because our general arguments are, to some extent, the same as those which were used last year. But it must be remembered that in calculating the weight of testimony there is behind the official figures the fact that the yearly figures of the Board of Trade were exactly confirmed by the most careful Census when the Census came. There is the fact that the Registrar-General, in his Report on the Census, pointed out how accurate the Census had been in this particular point, and that the Royal Commission, after going into this question and hearing the evidence, confirmed the Registrar-General: so that you have the Board of Trade, the Census, the Registrar-General, and the Commission all agreed upon the smallness of the figures. The Commission explained what they thought was not a real increase from ·58 to ·69, on the ground that greater care was taken than on previous occasions, and then they added—

> "The proportion of aliens in this country is comparatively small."

Well, now, by the detailed Census Returns which came out in November last from the Ministry of Commerce, there are over one million aliens in France. It is often said that they are not workmen. But they are workmen — Belgian, Italian, Swiss, and Spanish workmen. In the department of the Nord alone there are as many alien workmen as there are alien people in the whole of the United Kingdom. Now these facts are so strong that our opponents, who really understand the matter like the hon. and gallant Member for Stepney, get their figures by counting the children of aliens born in this country. The hon. and gallant Member has often said—

> "It is true the total number is small, but then their children are virtually alien immigrants like themselves,"

but we must take direct issue with him. Evidence was given before the Commission by the school authorities and others in the East End who are most competent witnesses. The overwhelming weight of testimony is on the side of those who say that these children are completely English. The typical evidence was that of the master of Betts Street School, who pointed out that the English history of the Jewish children was infinitely better than the English history of the average English children, and that the children were proud to become English. I think that the whole history of the United States, where you have seen the whole of the alien emigrants moulded into an essentially English race, proves that the spirit is far more important than the birth.

I come now very briefly to deal with a pleasanter portion of my task—the points in which the Home Secretary has tried to meet some of the Amendments which some of us placed on the Paper last year. Personally, I admit that he has tried to meet myself upon four points in connection with Amendments which we did not reach last year, but which I had placed upon the Paper. The most important is one which interests the House, and that is the subject of asylum for victims of political and religious persecution, and I confess that the words of the Home Secretary, which do not touch religious persecution, appear to me illusory as far as political persecution is concerned. In Clause 1 Sub-section 3 the words are—

> "To avoid prosecution for an offence."

What can have been the instructions given to the unfortunate draftsman which led him to put in those words? Take Russia. Russia is the country from which most of the people fly who come here to avoid political and religious persecution. They do not fly from "prosecutions." They would not be able to prove that a charge has been made against them of an offence committed, but that is what they would have to prove under these words. Then there is nothing about the victims of religious persecution, and I shall propose to place on the Paper again the words which I should have moved last year in Committee, namely, "by reason of the treatment of the religious body to which he belongs." The Home Secretary has also accepted an Amendment of mine which was a useful one as far as it goes, but too much importance must not be attached to it. It limits the countries of conviction to those with which we have an extradition treaty. There was a good deal of argument upon it last year, and the Home Secretary refused to take that view, but it has this effect—we have no extradition treaty in Turkey and the result is that Young Turks and Armenians will in some cases receive protection which they would

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not receive under the Bill of last year. It hardly applies to any country except Turkey. We have extradition treaties with almost all the others.

Then the Home Secretary has tried to meet the very powerful case made against his last year's Bill by the Police Commissioners in regard to the cross-Channel traffic. He has tried to meet them by distinguishing between port and port. There will be difficulties of course. It may have the effect of looking at Newhaven as if a *privilegium* was being established for Dover. But I name the matter only because it involves the extraordinary definition in this Bill and the form in which the Bill has been drawn. "Immigrants" are defined as being "alien steerage passengers." "Steerage" is defined as being other than "cabin" and so far there is nothing inconsistent with the Merchant Shipping Acts, but when we come to "cabin" passengers there is no definition. They are not to be the "cabin passengers" of the Merchant Shipping Acts, but they are to be defined from time to time by order of the Secretary of State. It rather suggests, therefore, that the Secretary of State will establish some new definition of his own, wholly different from that of the Merchant Shipping Acts now known to the law. That matter arises at once and affects all this question of the ports.

The only other point of detail which is worth naming is one that has been subject to a good deal of remark outside the House. The whole of the words with regard to infectious disease which were in the Bill last year, and upon which the Home Secretary spoke, both on the introduction and on the Second Reading, have disappeared from the Bill. There was almost criminal negligence displayed in the instructions for drafting the Bill last year. The Bill was so drawn that there was absolute conflict between it and the Act of 1896 and the Order of the Local Government Board signed "Henry Chaplin" in November of that year. If the Bill of last year had passed as introduced, the medical officer of health would have gone on board a ship partly representing the Local Government Board and partly representing the Home Office. The Home Secretary said the intention was to keep out persons suffering from infectious disease, but under the present Bill the only person who must land under any circumstances will be the alien suffering from infectious disease. He cannot be kept out. He will land under the Public Health Act of 1896 under the Order signed "Henry Chaplin" whether you like it or not.

The case for the Bill in the minds of those who support the Bill on the other side of the House is mainly the economic. We know that the Government are not anti-Semitic and do not desire to encourage that feeling, but I have letters from outside this House on anti-Semitic grounds. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No, No!"]

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): Can the right hon. Gentleman quote any letters to prove that?

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I will not quote private letters but can quote the public Press.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: What papers? Where are they?

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: Many papers. We read them—[MINISTERIAL cries of "Quote"]—and in them the object is stated to be to protect the British working man against the competition of the Polish Jew, who, they say, is coming to this country in increasing numbers in order to avoid conscription in the Russo-Japanese War. It has been said that this Bill is the first of a series of measures which we shall have to pass to protect the Briton against alien competition. But I doubt whether the Bill, if passed, would have any effect in that direction. The critical words in the Bill are these—

> "Is in a position to obtain the means of decently supporting himself."

What will this be held to mean? Will it shut out competition with the British working man? Do the Government intend that it shall? Is that their meaning? Supposing a Russian Jew arriving at the Port of London is met by his brother, say a tailor in Stepney, and that the brother tells the examining officer, "I am working for Mr. So-and-So, and I shall be able to get him a job there." Will that be the position to obtain the means to support himself? I think it will. If so, where will exclusion come in? The trades most concerned agree that sweating should be dealt with by measures such as have been at work in New Zealand and several of the United States. These measures were proposed by us in 1895 and again in 1901, and we believe they would be effective in preventing sweating competition. It was the opinion of the Lords Committee on Sweating that it was not due to the alien, and surely in the face of the fact that the Commission reported that the evil had decreased since the Lords Report it cannot be contended that a case is made out for this Bill as a means of dealing with sweating.

The other point to which I wish to draw attention is the exclusion of victims of political and religious persecution. Of course we have Russia in our minds. The Bill does not touch these victims. There are the religious refugees who are hounded from Russia by fear of mob violence, and there are the political refugees—those who are not prosecuted but arrested by Administration Order. They are carried through the streets of Petersburg or Moscow in cabs surrounded by *sotnias* of Cossacks—editors of newspapers and men of weight and authority who disappear clean into space as if they had never existed and are never heard of again. Some are consigned to the fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul, or to the worse terrors of Schlusselburg. In St. Peter and St. Paul they are liable to arrest under Administration Order. The terror is not diminishing but rather increasing. There is no person of the professional class in Russia who does not stand in danger of immediate arrest merely on suspicion. If they get warning, they fly from the country stripped of all their possessions, and perhaps come here to find asylum at our hands. I say that asylum in the past has been of benefit to this country, and I believe we derive benefit from it still. In the face of a case so miserable and so trivial, and in view of the fact that the evil is declining rather than increasing I say the Bill ought to be rejected by this House, and I shall certainly divide the House on the points named in my Amendment.

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*MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): I was one of those who last year supported the right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken in his opposition to the Bill. As far as I can see there is no material difference between the Bill of last year and this one. There may be differences of detail, but there remains the poverty test which was our real objection to last year's Bill, that which we think is in no way an indication whether or not a man coming into the country would be a good citizen. On that ground it is for us to oppose this Bill as vigorously as we can. A campaign of misrepresentation has been going on in the country, joined in by even so eminent a person as the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. It is alleged that those who oppose the Bill are unwilling to exclude diseased and criminal aliens now coming to this country. The events of last year are directly contrary to that. In this House the right hon. Member for East Fife distinctly stated that so far as he was concerned, and he was supported by the whole of the Opposition, he was ready to entertain the proposition for the exclusion of the criminal alien in any practical way, and the same policy was shown perfectly clearly by the action of the Opposition in the Committee upstairs where all the Members of the opposition to the Bill except one—the Member for Bolton—declared they would be ready to pass any legislation which would have the practical effect of excluding criminal or diseased aliens from this country. After the Bill had been deserted by the Government upstairs, the hon. and gallant Member for Central Sheffield brought in a small Bill to exclude the criminal aliens from this country. The Member for Dewsbury and myself put our names at his request at the back of the Bill. It was brought in and it never had a single voice in opposition to it from this side of the House, but it was regularly blocked by Members on the other side of the House, in spite of all appeals. Therefore, if there are burglaries committed by foreign burglars from New York and Paris in the West End of London the responsibility lies with hon. Gentlemen opposite. Of course on this side of the House we perfectly understand the tactics represented by the opposition to that Bill.

We are ready to make allowance for Members making use of this Bill as a Party measure. We are nearing the election, and hon. Members opposite feel it is a very popular measure to go with to the country. But that depends upon the standard of the Government's popularity. It is perfectly true that the Bill does not arouse any furious resentment in the minds of any part of the electorate. It does not lose votes right and left like the Education Act, or Chinese Labour. Taken by the standard of an ordinary Government this Bill would be harmless, and not an unpopular Bill. Taken by the standard of this Government it is a frantically popular Bill. That it is not very popular may be seen by the fact that in the East of London, where if in any part of the country the Bill might be expected to be popular, the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mile End) only managed to get into the House by frantic and desperate efforts and with a drop of a thousand in the Conservative majority.

MR. H. LAWSON (Tower Hamlets, Mile End): May I interrupt the hon. Member? My opponent at the last moment declared his opinions were the same as mine.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): May I point out that Mr. Strauss signed the memorial to the Leader of the Opposition in favour of this Bill.

MR. TREVELYAN: It is at any rate clear that the Party from which alone opposition to this Bill might be expected is not so deperately unpopular in the East of London. We, on this side, may very well adopt this attitude, that until something like proof is brought from the other side that there is any enormous immigration of aliens we are justified in taking the decision of the Report of the Immigration Commission that the best figures to be arrived at are those by deduction from the Census Returns which show that the increase of population due to alien immigration is something like 7,000 a year. Until hon. Members opposite can produce more accurate figures from official sources I shall argue on the assumption that the increase of population from foreign immigration is not greater than 10,000 aliens per year. Now, the question is not merely how many aliens are coming into the country, but how many aliens would be debarred if an Act of this sort were brought into operation. We have the example of the United States of America. In the last three years in the United States of America the rate of exclusion of immigrants was as follows. In 1902 one alien was excluded out of every 110 who came to America. In 1903 one was excluded out of every ninety-eight, and in 1904 one out of every 101. That is to say, in recent years in America about one in 100 have been excluded of those who came to American shores. Of course I know it will be said that a fairly large number of aliens are deterred from crossing the Atlantic and attempting to enter. That, of course, has to be taken into consideration, and, I take it the House will think it reasonable if we multiply the number by four for the purpose of what would occur in this country. That would be assuming that three people would be deterred from coming for every one who came over here and was excluded. Taking that calculation, assuming that there are four times as many aliens excluded per 100 as there are excluded in America, there will be 400 aliens excluded in England out of 10,000 that come here.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: Why four?

MR. TREVELYAN: I am taking what I consider to be the outside figure.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: Why not fifty?

MR. TREVELYAN: I make what I consider an outside estimate. I say it is reasonable to assume that rather more aliens will be deterred by the fear of some of them that they will be excluded if they come over, and I say that taking four times as many as are excluded in the United States will be a quite reasonable calculation on our part. At that rate we should have excluded something like 400 out of 10,000 who come to our shores. I ask what will be the economic effect of excluding a ship-load of 400, or even 800, or even 1,000 if you like, from the labour market of England? Of course, as long as the British public is under the idea that there is an immense immigration of 100,000 aliens yearly, and that this Bill is going to stop about 30,000 of them, this is a large question, but the electoral card castle will fall to the ground when it is known that it is only a question of a few hundreds who can be stopped under this Bill under the best expectations.

The truth is if it were only an economic question we on this side of the House should regard it as almost too insignificant a matter to oppose, although we think it useless protection, but there are two serious results which we foresee from this legislation. The first is that it diverts the attention of the public from more serious remedies for the deep-seated and terrible evils of overcrowding and sweating in our country. Overcrowding and sweating are national institutions which the aliens find when they come here. They want to be sweated and overcrowded as little as the native-born, but at first landing they are naturally more liable to suffer from the conditions of the towns in which they find themselves. Their overcrowding and sweating is only a part of a system from which our population suffers immensely more than the few aliens who come over here. This Bill is practically the only way in which the Government has tried to meet the great questions of sweating and overcrowding. It is important that they should try, but I venture to think they would have won more sympathy from the great mass of social reformers if they had attempted to come to some understanding upon the extension of the Factory Acts, or upon some measures such as my right hon. friend the Member for the Forest of Dean was speaking about, that have been adopted in other countries to deal with the great evils of sweating, and I must say I think it an evil that a small Bill of this kind should be introduced and should turn the eyes of the public from the direction of dealing with the fundamental evils from which the unsatisfactory condition of our great towns comes. But although this Bill can have no very great economic effect, what we fear on this side of the House is that it will have cruel results for some hundreds of unfortunate people who are at this time flying from persecution in the East of Europe. The Government has, it is true, attempted to deal with the question of asylum by inserting words which were not in the Bill of last year that—

> "In the case of an immigrant who proves that he is seeking admission to this country solely to avoid prosecution for an offence of a political character, leave to land should not be refused on the ground merely of want of means, or the probability of his becoming a charge on the rates."

The insertion of these words in the first clause is supposed to guard against the exclusion of the political refugee, but, as my right hon. friend has pointed out, in the first place this does not touch the question of religious persecution. I want, however, to ask the House under what circumstances does the political or the religious refugee come to this country? He practically never comes having actually been accused of any political crime. He very rarely comes having escaped from a Bastille or the Siberian Mines. He has to fly beforehand, and the great mass of those coming to these shores are not flying even from the expectation of any immediate evil to themselves, but from the general system of bad government which exists year in and year out in the East of Europe.

Now at this moment there is a great and general sympathy with the oppressed and misgoverned Russian people. For very many years we have been hearing in this country stories of the persecution of the Jewish people in Poland and in Russia. We have read many a statement of the evils of that government which the hon. Member for Stepney has so well inserted in his Reports to the Immigration Commission. We know that in Russia now and for many years there has been practically licensed mob violence against the Jewish population which may break out anywhere and at any time, which is not in any way restricted by the police, but in many cases is obviously sanctioned and encouraged by them, and a great part of the population which is now flying to our shores are people who have been robbed and ruined and chased away from their country, and who, in many cases, naturally come here absolutely penniless, who will not in any sense be defended by this clause, whose want of money is due to the very persecution they are flying from, and who will very likely be excluded by the Bill we are now discussing. But within the last six months there has been a new development. There has been an increase of emigration from Poland and Russia, mostly passing through this country, though some of it may be staying. What is the reason of it? It is perfectly well known to those who have studied these questions, it is because of the war in Manchuria and the calling up of the Reservists in Russia. Now there is one very special reason why the Jewish population is flying from the conscription in Russia. The family of the ordinary Russian soldier in case of his death gets a pension of forty roubles, but a Jew's family gets nothing, and I think everyone in this House will agree it is very natural that the Jewish population should be flying from being called up as Reservists when they know well that in the event of death in Manchuria absolute destitution faces their families. But the greater part are native Russians, not Jews, who are fleeing to this country or through this country. This war that is going on in Manchuria is universally detested by the Russian people. In many parts of Russia the barracks are full of Reservists whom the Government dare not arm because they are so discontented that the Government does not know what they would do if they were armed. It is no wonder that at this moment the people are fleeing from conscription, and in fleeing from conscription, what have they to do? They have to make their way across the country by bribing Russian officials or by paying guides, and most of them, by the time they get to the ports, have spent every penny they have got in the world. It is these men you will be either excluding from this country or making it more difficult for them to get to America, and it is odious to think that at this moment the British people should in any sense make it more difficult even for a few hundreds of men to escape from the tyranny which we all deprecate.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out all the words after the word 'That,' and add the words 'this House, holding that the evils of low-priced alien labour can best be met by legislation to prevent sweating, desires to assure itself before assenting to the Aliens Bill that sufficient regard is had in the proposed measure to the retention of the principle of asylum for the victims of persecution.'"—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*MAJOR EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I have listened to the two speeches which have just been delivered with considerable interest. I shall endeavour, in the course of my remarks, to answer the various points raised by the mover and seconder of the Amendment. The hon. Member for the Forest of Dean seems to suppose that the whole increase of alien immigration to this country consists of motor-car drivers, a statement which will be received with some surprise and considerable amusement in the East End of London and other districts.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I certainly said there had been a decrease of aliens in this country in the last two years.

*MAJOR EVANS GORDON: I hope to deal successfully with that contention later on, when I refer to the figures. But, in the first place, I should like to point out to the House that hon. Members opposite, and the newspapers which represent their views, have been free in their accusations of insincerity against the Government and the occupants of these benches. We have been told that the Aliens Bill is the outcome of a spurious local agitation got up by unscrupulous politicians for electioneering purposes—I do not know, indeed, but that I am numbered among them—and that the Bill of last year was merely "window-dressing" for the purpose of deceiving the public. Regarding the charge of electioneering, I should like to remind hon. Gentlemen opposite that in making it they are not only defaming us, but, at the same time, blackening the character of their own supporters. Hon. Gentlemen opposite say we are on the eve of an election. We have had remarkable testimony of the fact in the East End of London. Every Radical candidate, and two hon. Members of this House who sit for East End constituencies—the very districts affected—have taken the very unusual course of sending a petition to the Leaders of their Party in this House, asking them not to oppose the Second Reading of this Bill. I have been interested to hear from the speakers who have just sat down that they do not intend to listen to that pathetic appeal. They are to divide the House against the Bill.

With regard to the charge of "window-dressing," I think the Bill introduced by the Government provides a complete and irrefutable answer. Have hon. Gentlemen opposite really considered what the problem confronting the country is? I would remind the House that year by year some 1,500,000 of human beings of every age, sex, and religion, the healthy and hopeful, the diseased and hopeless, good, bad, and indifferent, are on the move from the South and East of Europe pressing towards the West. The expulsive forces which cause this great movement are in the main mis-government and oppression. But other influences are at work. The enormous number of these people who have gone before make a drawing force to the people who are left behind, and this great travelling mass of humanity has produced among the shipping companies, and people connected with railways and other transport, a fierce competition. Every single person who can be induced to travel is another ticket sold. All these forces add naturally to the number of people who are on the move. This immigration is not by any means wholly Jewish. The Jewish emigrants do form a very large part of the whole, and in their case it may be said to take the form almost of a national migration. There are 5,500,000 Jews in the Russian Empire, but we cannot consider all these people to be possible emigrants, though a large number of them must be considered in that light, unless affairs in Eastern Europe undergo a profound modification. As things are, it is the poorest and the least fit of these people who move, and it is the residuum of these again who come to, or are left in this country.

Having realised the magnitude of this movement, the problem for us is what steps we should take, both in the interest of the aliens themselves and of our own population, to regulate and control it. Are we to sit still and do nothing, and without reference to our own great social problems and industrial conditions to receive everybody who chooses to come, without limitation as to number and without stipulation as to character, health, or industrial fitness; or are we to attach reasonable conditions to the hospitality we offer and set up reasonable safeguards against this country being used, as it is now being used, as the refuse heap of the whole of Europe. Hon. Members opposite have no hesitation whatever in leaving things exactly as they are. On the other hand, on these benches we are unanimous in believing that legislation is urgently required. The Party opposite attach great importance to the most-favoured-nation clause in matters of commerce, but in this matter of immigration they seem to desire that we should remain in the position of the least favoured of all the nations of the world.

The Western tendency carries enormous numbers to America, but the American law, stringent to-day, is growing more and more stringent, and every indication points in the direction of the law being made still more strict and being still more rigorously enforced. As other channels become narrower, so the flow of immigration here must inevitably increase down the only channel which remains open. We have a remarkable proof of this already, for while the number of aliens arriving in the United States is falling off, the number arriving in this country is steadily increasing. [OPPOSITION cries of "No, no!" and "Oh!"] We have often been told that the American law on this subject is a failure, and is inefficient, and the number of persons rejected in America is cited as a proof of that assertion. But the effect of the American law cannot be measured by the number of persons who come within actual reach of that law. As a matter of fact rejections in the United States are steadily increasing, and last year they amounted to 18,691 persons. But to gauge the effect we must not look to the ports of arrival but to the ports of origin and embarkation. The American law does not operate only at the point where it is enforced, but also in countries far remote from the United States where the American Government has no jurisdiction whatsoever. The numbers deported from American ports, though numbered by thousands, are insignificant compared with the vast number of those to whom passages are refused by the shipping companies because they are unable to reach the standard of industrial efficiency and health set up by the American Government. In 1901 the Industrial Commission reported that owing to the increased stringency of the American law in regard to contract labour 50,000 passages were refused in the course of a single year, and in Naples 10,000 passages were similarly refused in the course of twelve months. Unless some such legislation as was now being proposed were adopted, the only country open to this class of aliens would be England.

I cannot establish this point better than by quoting a very brief extract from the Report of the Select Committee of 1899. They found that—

> "The better class of emigrants only arrive in transit to other countries (chiefly America), but the poorest class remains here."

The Committee went on to say that the distribution of these poor aliens both as regards localities and trades is such that the pressure occasioned is out of all proportion to their numbers. Now let us take the port of Grimsby, which is principally concerned in the transmigration traffic—people going to America, and so forth. These people are allowed to land without any medical examination worthy of the name. No sooner do they arrive at Liverpool than they are subjected to a close medical examination by the officers of our own Board of Trade. With what result? With the remarkable result that the very people who have been allowed to land freely in Grimsby are refused permission to leave this country again because they are physically unfit to proceed to other countries.

MR. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury): What proportion?

*MAJOR EVANS GORDON: I can get the figures from the Return, but I can state that it is considerable. But whether it is one or 500 is immaterial. The question is one of principle, and I consider the present condition of things utterly absurd. It actually appears that we take steps to keep in this country what no other country is willing to receive. But this is not all. Not only does the residuum remain in this country in that way, but we are compelled also to receive people who have made the attempt to go to other countries, but who have been refused admittance in America and elsewhere. Hardly a day passes without people of this character arriving. I have been going closely into the matter on the steamers lately myself. I find that in the year ending 31st March last no fewer than 308 such persons, who voluntarily admitted that they were either rejected in America or other countries abroad, arrived in the river Thames. Seventy-two had been across to the States and had been shipped back here and dumped down in London. I understand that the number rejected by America who come to Liverpool is more serious still. Recently 700 people of this character arrived in Liverpool, and a great number of them are to be found in workhouses there to-day. These figures, important as they are, are a mere indication of the position this country occupies in regard to having to receive persons unfit for reception in other parts of the world. The laws of America and our Colonies are perfectly well known, and the consequence is that numbers of people know that it is impossible to apply for passages to the shipping companies because they would not be allowed to go further. The result is that they do not attempt to go, but come to this country instead.

The right hon. Baronet the Member for Forest of Dean in his speech on the introduction of this Bill, and I think again to-day, made a statement to which I should like briefly to refer. He said that the Bill last year—and he was very vehement on the point—broke down solely on the police evidence which was given before the Royal Commission. Well I think that statement will surprise hon. Members who were colleagues of mine on the Grand Committee as much as it surprised me.

The Bill broke down because hon. Members opposite had made up their minds to destroy the Bill, and because the procedure laid down for Grand Committees enabled them to carry out their purpose. The obstruction in that Committee was gross, open, and palpable. The hon. Member for Oldham, who glories in strange ambitions, has openly boasted of his share in the performance. The police evidence alluded to by the right hon. Baronet referred to the detection of criminals at the port of landing. Mr. Henry and Sir E. Bradford pointed out, quite rightly, the difficulties in the way. Against these views we may set those of Sir Robert Anderson, who in a recent letter to *The Times* expressed an entirely different opinion. I hope I have said enough to show that the Bill was not wrecked upon this point.

Now let me turn to another view of this question which is before the House, that is the introduction of disease conveyed by undesirable aliens. Some people believe that not enough disease is imported by aliens to make a medical examination worth while. I will only say that smallpox and scarlet fever have unquestionably been introduced by aliens within the past few months, and that trachoma, a contagious disease, which is the third principal cause of total loss of sight, and favus, a disgusting and contagious disease of the skin, have been, and are being, introduced by these aliens on a large scale. It is also probable that the disease known as miner's worm, which has proved a calamity to our mining population, was originally brought into this country by foreign immigrants. Last year out of 121,870 would-be emigrants to America 6,000 were rejected at the Control Stations on the German frontier as diseased, and 2,000 more on the quays by two German shipping companies. What was there then, what is there to-day, to prevent these people from coming to England? Absolutely nothing. That numbers do come is, I think, shown by such documents as the recent Report of the Polish Emigration Society in London, which showed that out of 256 immigrants whom they helped in January, February, and March last, 136 were found to be suffering from serious diseases of the eye. I believe that the moment it is made known that people suffering from disease will not be admitted, they will no longer be brought, and as we in this House have the power to stop so grave a scandal it is folly to allow it to continue.

But, the gravamen of the right hon. Baronet's objection to this Bill rests upon other grounds. As I understand these objections they are, firstly, that the Bill interferes with the right of asylum without any proof being given of the necessity of any such step; and, secondly, that there is no increase of alien population in this country, or at least that the alien population here is trifling compared with that of every other country in the world. Now, what is this so-called right of asylum? As far as I understand it, it amounts to this, that this country has consistently refused to surrender persons who, having committed a political and non-extraditable offence abroad, have sought a refuge here. The Bill will in no way interfere with this long-established and time-honoured practice. The right hon. Gentleman cites instances of individuals who have come here from time to time under these circumstances, and assumes, quite erroneously, that they would be excluded under this Bill. What ground has he for that assumption? Suppose this Act were now in force and that Maxime Gorky or Father Gapon were to arrive on these shores, would they be excluded? Certainly not. But the right of asylum may be interpreted in a far wider sense. It may be said that we are bound by some unwritten law to admit any one who states that he is persecuted in his own country. If that contention be accepted, then, of course, there is an end to any restrictive legislation. But I would ask the House of Commons, and I would ask the country, to pause long and consider well before assenting to any such wide and dangerous generalisation. It opens up very alarming possibilities. It means that we are to admit here, as of right, any and every one who is discontented, or says he is, with the government in his own country. What is there to prevent an immigration *en masse* from Turkey, or from Servia, or from Macedonia? Personally, I can see no sense in saying that we must admit people, otherwise undesirable, merely because the political conditions under which they have been living are unsatisfactory to them. Surely we cannot solve the political problems of every country in Europe by admitting their discontented and superfluous population into this overcrowded island.

I will go further, and I will say that, when we consider the social and industrial position of our own poor working classes, we, who are uninjured ourselves, have not the right to cast such burdens upon those who are less fortunately situated and least able to help themselves. Hon. Members opposite luxuriate in fine and heroic sentiment so long as it is at the expense of other people. They dispense a generous hospitality with other people's money. "As many paupers as choose to come," says the hon. Member for Elland, "we will fight to the death to admit them." He might add "especially as we have not to bear the burden." No, it is others who bear the cost and burden of this misplaced generosity. Hon. Members opposite do not live in daily terror of being turned into the street to make room for an unsavoury Pole, their rent is not raised by 50 per cent. or 100 per cent. in a week, their wages are not cut down, their employment is not taken from them. They do not see opening after opening which formerly offered some chance of employment closed and filled by cheap imported labour; they do not see the business on which they and their parents have lived dwindle and fall into bankruptcy. The Blue-books say that there are no aliens. The bitter cry of the poor people is invented by unscrupulous politicians and has no existence in fact. The clergy of all denominations who live among the people do not know the conditions and the facts. If there should be any grievance it is local and trifling. Ignore it, hide it away, drown the outcry by beating the sentimental drum with the right of asylum for one stick and the traditional policy of England for the other. To me it is a monstrous thing that, while we are at our wits' end to find work and house-room for our own people, we should at the same time be admitting ship-load after ship-load of unskilled labour from abroad, people who must and do add to the congestion of districts and markets already over-congested. The unskilled labour market is so overcrowded that even last summer a great London Liberal newspaper recorded the remarkable fact that for a single unskilled labourer's berth there were literally 1,000 applicants. In spite of this fact, and in spite of the fact that the unemployed problem is still unsolved, can hon. Members opposite look with equanimity upon a state of things by which unskilled labour is being imported by fourteen steamers a week into the port of London alone.

This brings me to the question of numbers, upon which the right hon. Baronet holds such curiously inaccurate opinions. The right hon. Gentleman in supporting his argument as to the figures, said that the Royal Commission unanimously adopted the Board of Trade Returns. That statement, coming from one whose industry and accuracy we all admire, is the more remarkable. What are the facts? The Royal Commission went very exhaustively into this question, and as the matter is of great importance I must trouble the House by quoting our unanimous finding on the point. Referring to the Board of Trade statistics of immigration and emigration from which the right hon. Baronet quoted, we said—

> "It seems to be established that the Returns made under 6th William 4th do not afford any accurate information as to the number of alien immigrants arriving in this country. It follows that we have no accurate guide as to the number of alien immigrants in this country, and that the nearest approach to such information is to be found in the Census Return."

Let the House mark the words "nearest approach." We went on to say, with regard to the Census, that the Census itself was by no means accurate, and the Registrar-General himself admitted that fact.

SIR CHARLES DILKE: He said that it was prepared with exceeding care.

*MAJOR EVANS GORDON: I have the quotation here. The Registrar-General said that he could not claim for the Census Return complete accuracy. How, in the face of that statement, can the right hon. Baronet say that the Royal Commission accepted and adopted the Immigration Returns of the Board of Trade I am absolutely at a loss to understand. The direct contrary is the fact. I was instrumental in drawing up this account to a great extent. My feeling was that we were condemning these Returns as being valueless for the purpose of estimating the number of alien immigrants to this country. That is the point we wished to make, and if our language does not make it clear I do not know what language we could employ. But not only that; Mr. Llewellyn Smith, who is the author of the Return, was constrained to make the statement that the Act under which the figures were collected was not a statistical Act, and that, therefore, the Board of Trade has to content itself by making such bricks as it can with such straw as it has got. In view of that statement I wish to make it quite clear that we accept none of the inferences, for they are nothing more, as to the net annual increase of the alien population. These statistics rest on hypothesis, not on actual collected and compared data. They are haphazard and based on supposition. Nevertheless, these figures were announced by the right hon. Baronet as if they were incontrovertible and absolutely accurate. The right hon. Baronet did not, however, quote what Mr. Llewellyn Smith says in this very Return. As to the proportion of the inward and outward stream of foreign passengers, he says—

> "More than this cannot with certainty be inferred from the figures, in view of the possible errors in both the totals representing the inward and outward movement respectively. For example, the slight errors that may arise in connection with the treatment of passengers whose nationality is not recorded, or the understatement of children arriving from the Continent, though small in comparison with the total figures, may be sufficient to make the small balance between these totals in 1904 untrustworthy, except for purposes of rough comparison with previous years."

That, to my mind, shows that we need not attach great importance to the figures that have been put forward. With the proviso that the Royal Commission did not adopt these figures, and that Mr. Llewellyn Smith himself says that they cannot claim any statistical accuracy—I say that: even if the balance shown were accurate, that does not in the least preclude an enormous increase of the alien population in the East End of London at one and the same time. The figures outward and inward take no account of quality. In course of examination I asked Mr. Llewellyn Smith if these figures dealt in any way with quality. And he replied—

> "Not at all, they are purely numbers; there is nothing to prevent people of high social *status* leaving this country, being balanced against destitute poor coming into the East End of London."

But, Sir, even if these figures were correct, which I do not admit, it does not rob the agitation in the East End of London of the real truth which is behind it, and which has now been admitted by the action of the Radical Members and candidates in that district. Let me give one instance. If these figures are so small as to prove as the right hon. Baronet thinks that there are practically no aliens arriving, how does it come about that in 1902 the Jewish Board of Guardians relieved 17,790 persons and another Jewish Board 1,140, and that in 1904 23,970 persons were relieved? Where do these people come from?

AN HON. MEMBER: Where do they go to?

*MAJOR EVANS GORDON: The right hon. Baronet said they did not come here; they apparently dropped from the clouds. There is an enormous increase of these people, and they are not only newcomers, but they stop some time here as these figures show.

But the case does not rest upon these figures at all. It rests upon other evidence. Such evidence as our own senses; those of us who are familiar with the facts have senses, and they should not be despised. The House has to face the fact that during the last few years the area occupied by aliens in the East End of London has increased rapidly; it has doubled, trebled, quadrupled. Streets and districts formerly entirely English have become almost entirely foreign in character. We have the evidence of Chief Inspector Malveney, of the H Division, that in six years 107 whole streets in Stepney went out of English occupation into foreign occupation; and there is the statement of the Chief Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, who said in his last Annual Report that the alien colony in the East End continued to increase rapidly, and the area which it occupies is extending accordingly. There is not a clergyman or responsible resident in the East End of London who does not see this process of transformation and wholesale substitution of foreign for English population going on daily under his eyes. Three years ago the Bishop of Stepney said that—

> "In some districts where there was formerly evidence of comparative wealth and comfort these had been absolutely wiped out, and the East End of London was being swamped by aliens who were coming in like an army of locusts, eating up the native population or turning them out. Their churches were being continually left like islands in the midst of an alien sea."

And yet in the face of these statements the right hon. Baronet says that the whole thing is moonshine and a figment of the imagination. Not all the Blue-books or statistics in the world can controvert these incontrovertible facts. I have made inquiry on the spot myself. I went down to Gravesend the other day and looked over the returns of the immigration officer as to the people who were coming here. I found that in a single week 230 men, 97 women, and 60 children had arrived over and above the known transmigrants who the immigration officer, accustomed to these people and speaking their language, said had no prospect really of ever leaving this country. They gave addresses of friends in the East End of London, and for all intents and purposes these people came to stay. Here, then, we have four hundred persons coming into the congested districts of the East End of London in a single week! Knowing these things as I know them, what wonder that I was surprised when I heard the hon. Gentleman opposite declare that there is no increase in the alien population.

The hon. Gentleman laid great stress upon a comparison between the foreign population in this country and in other countries. The figures for Switzerland, for instance, are said to be much larger than the figures for this country. I would like to show that there is no analogy between the two situations. In the first place Switzerland is a land of tourists, and every tourist is put down in the Returns on Census day as a foreigner. That is a considerable set-off. Then, again, a large foreign population goes there for cheap education for their children, or for reasons of health and pleasure. Again, it was stated that a number of Italian labourers went into Switzerland. Quite true, but they came in response to a specific economic demand and are engaged on railway and other construction works; but when these are completed they return to their own country. They do not create any of the difficulties and problems which we have to deal with in the East End of London. Moreover, Switzerland, with its 9·58 of a foreign population to its total population, is no nation in the true sense, but a confederation of the three principal races of Western and Central Europe, *i.e.*, German, French, and Italian. It is, therefore, perfectly natural that there should be a strong flow of Germans into the German-speaking, of French into the French-speaking, and of Italians into the Italian-speaking parts of the country. These people at once find their own language and customs prevailing, and are in no way aliens except in a purely technical sense. In face of these facts it seems difficult to see how this altogether exceptional state of things can be compared to the immigration into our large towns of miserably poor people of an entirely alien race, from the remote corners of Europe. But there are other reasons which render any comparison absurd. In Switzerland the children of aliens are only naturalised as Swiss subjects after coming of age, and then only by leave. The same is the case in Germany. In this country the children of foreign parents born here are enumerated as English. In one trial schedule, in order to ascertain the difference in the figures the children would make if enumerated, it was found that 50 per cent. would have to be added to the foreign population. Thus the foreigners or people of foreign extraction in this country are very largely in excess of the numbers shown in the Census or

Board of Trade Returns. The right hon. Baronet says we ought to consider these people as English. I do not care whether we consider them English or not, but what we must consider is the total result of the alien immigration on the industrial employment of our own people.

I have dealt at some length with these points because they are frequently advanced as reasons for allowing things to remain as they are, and because I desire to show that they have, when closely considered, very little relevancy or importance. The economic and industrial question is, on the other hand, a matter of very great importance, and I hope to have an opportunity later to go into it much more closely than I can do to-day. Hon. Members opposite are apparently violently opposed to any legislation which will keep out competitive unskilled labour from this country. They would admit without hesitation an unlimited number of destitute aliens and let them loose upon our already over-congested unskilled labour market. As to that point, I think that the finding of the Royal Commission ought again to be brought to the notice of the House where we said that—

> "On the whole we arrive at the conclusion, after weighing evidence on both sides, that it has not been proved that there is any serious direct displacement of skilled English labour."—[OPPOSITION cheers.]

Yes, hon. Gentlemen applaud that, but let me finish—

> "It is, of course, impossible to say how much, if any, work now done by alien labour would have been performed by native female or other labour had there been no alien immigration into this country. But leaving the skilled labour market out of the question, we think it proved that the industrial conditions under which a large number of aliens work in London falls below the standard which ought to exist."—[MINISTERIAL cheers.]

I am glad that we are agreed upon that point anyway. But hon. Gentlemen may ask to what extent has this immigration affected the labour market? I will tell them. There was an estimate made by the Jewish Board of Deputies the other day—not confined to Jews at all. They found that, as the result of immigration, no less than 200,000 foreign workmen were employed in this country at the present time. Now I submit to hon. Members that it is nonsense to say that a movement of that magnitude can have gone on without displacing English labour, or that it can continue without a similar result. It is not the fact that alien immigration only affects certain specific trades; it is not the fact that the East End of London only is touched.

It is important to realise, too, the condition of these people after they come, and, if I had the time, I could quote many deplorable bits of evidence showing the circumstances under which these aliens live and work in the East End. So much are they the victims of the very competition they come here to increase that their own representatives are doing all that they possibly can to discourage them from coming. The distress is shown by the figures I have just quoted of the enormous number of people in receipt of relief in the East End, and although it is true that few of them find their way into our own workhouses, still that is no indication of their real state or any proof that a great mass of pauperism and distress does not prevail among them. I notice that a large number of these people are repatriated by the Jewish Board of Guardians. The harrowing pictures that have been drawn of persecution in Russia and elsewhere may be true, but what I want to point out is that the Jewish Board of Guardians and other communal authorities have no hesitation in sending their people back to those very conditions; and why? Because there is no room for them here, and because their condition is no better in this country than it would be in their own. The evils of the situation are realised by all Jewish authorities, and at the great conference held at Frankfort the other day, at which representative Jews from all parts of Europe, including this country, were present, it was unanimously decided that no measure should be adopted which would be calculated to increase the flow of immigration. "Emigration to England and America will further be strongly discouraged," they say; "and the widest publicity will be given to the facts concerning the state of the labour market in England." If no immigrants were coming here at all, what would be the necessity for these reiterated warnings from serious bodies of this kind?

Again, it is sometimes said that we cannot do anything to help our own people without being cruelly unjust to the immigrants who come here, especially Jewish immigrants. Now what are the precepts and practice of the Jews themselves in this matter? Do they allow all their own people, irrespective of their industrial fitness or capacity, to go to their own colonies in the Argentine Republic and elsewhere? Not at all. Everybody is subjected to the closest scrutiny before he is allowed to start—scrutiny as to his antecedents, character, health and fitness in every respect. So much is this the fact that Mr. Zangwill, when recently discussing the proposed East African colony for Jews, made this remarkable statement—he said, "the colony was not to be the dumping ground for refugees." No, Sir; the privilege of being the dumping ground is reserved for this country, and when anyone dares to lift a voice in protest, or ventures to suggest that the same precautions should be taken here as are taken by the Jewish community themselves, we are denounced as Anti-Semites. We have no wish, and I say no reason can be given for saying we wish, to exclude persons from this country because they are Jews. Our desire is not to exclude undesirable aliens because they are Jews but because they are undesirable aliens. At the same time I do not see any reason why we should admit a man otherwise undesirable because he is of the Jewish faith, any more than we should admit a man because he was a Polish Catholic, or a Lithuanian Protestant.

There is another important point with regard to the alleged difficulty of discriminating between desirables and undesirables. I have watched this matter very closely, and I have come to the conclusion that it is very largely a fiction. I went down to the ships and saw the transmigrants separated from the immigrants, and a sample medical examination was taken, and no difficulty was experienced. No one could conduct this duty with more sympathy than Mr. Evans, the inspector in charge, who has been at great trouble to learn Russian and Yiddish, and who performed his duty with tact and intelligence, and I say in reply to the charges made last year that these people would be treated with brutality by the officials of the British Government, that such charges are calumnious. I think if hon. Members opposite could have seen these aliens they would have been surprised. We found some of them suffering from loathsome and unmentionable diseases, the importation of which into this country might and does lead to very serious results, and we found most of them verminous. I do not say persons should be excluded from this country because they are verminous, but I do say that if we make it known that people in that condition will not be allowed into this country they will be purified and cleansed before they are allowed to start.

I am afraid I have detained the House for a long time, and I will conclude my remarks by saying that I am quite unable to understand what the attitude of the Party opposite as a Party will be upon this Bill. It is well represented by the condition of the benches opposite. I am indeed sorry that I have bored the Front Bench opposite so that they have had to leave the House in sheer despair, but perhaps I may hope that the weight of my argument has been too much for them. I want to know what the position of the Party opposite is? Their leaders have not always been blind to the great disadvantage of the flow of alien immigration. Just let me quote to the House the words of one great statesman of the Party opposite, Lord Rosebery, who in 1904 said—

> "I take it if there is one certainty in the world it is this, that with the closing of the confines of States to the destitute emigrants of other countries there is no country in the world which will not be compelled to consider and reconsider its position with regard to pauper immigration, unless it wishes permanently to degrade the *status* and condition of its own workpeople."

Quite recently the Leader of the Opposition at Limehouse begged his hearers not to believe that he was indifferent to the inconvenience and disadvantage incident to the settlement of a large school of persons accustomed to a low standard of life and surroundings.

I am glad from so influential a source to welcome even the most tentative admission that evils do exist, and that some remedies are necessary. On the other hand, it is true that the right hon. Member for East Fife has expressed himself as entirely and utterly opposed to legislation of this kind. I believe he is in favour of the deportation of criminals that have been convicted in this country, but, broadly speaking, he is absolutely opposed to this kind of legislation. But with great respect to the right hon. Gentleman, for whose profound knowledge and political acumen I have the greatest admiration, I do not think that in this matter his opinion is perhaps so well worth having as that of the hon. Member for Poplar, whose constituency, if not immediately affected by alien immigration, is still beginning to feel the pressure, and for the purposes of this question, at all events, is in closer touch with this problem than the constituency of East Fife, which may be considered as somewhat remote. But the hon. Member for Poplar, speaking in 1903 in this House, said that he cordially desired legislation against unlimited immigration of destitute aliens, and he strongly objected to the refuse of Europe being dumped down on these shores. There are other Gentlemen opposite who have expressed very strong views on this question. There is the Member for South Wolverhampton, who has studied the subject and is an authority upon it. He said in East London, in 1902, that in his opinion there was every reason to keep these people out, and none for allowing them to come in. He desired to have a notice posted up, stating that "No rubbish to be shot here." These forcibly expressed views are those I hold, and also those held by Gentlemen who are in sympathy with me and who sit on these benches. We do not desire to exclude from this country any man who can maintain himself in circumstances of decency; the skilled artisan will always be welcomed here; we have no desire to rob the country of its ancient reputation for hospitality to foreigners, but we believe that in view of the social problems which confront us and in view of the difficulty of great masses of our own people to find employment, houseroom, and even food, there is no place on the face of the earth so little suited as our great industrial centres to receive great accretions of unskilled labourers from abroad. We hold that immigrants coming here should be submitted to the same process of selection as they have to submit to in other countries, and that the people sent here from abroad should be the best and not the worst of the population. We desire to rid our gaols of foreign criminals and our streets of foreign prostitutes and souteneurs, but, above all, we desire to save our own poor and working classes from an influence which must tend to make their lives more painful and more difficult, and deprive them of what we believe to be the most elementary of all their rights, namely, the opportunity of earning a living in their own land. I shall vote with confidence against this Amendment, and I thank the Government with all my heart for having introduced the Bill.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): Many hon. Members opposite thought that there was an inconsistency in those who had actively opposed the introduction of Chinese labour into South Africa opposing also a Bill such as this. But if we are inconsistent, hon. Members opposite are equally inconsistent. If they were against the alien in London, why were they not against the alien in South Africa? But for my part I neither plead guilty to inconsistency nor accuse others of it. The cases are not parallel. The Chinese cannot be absorbed into the population, and the industrial conditions in South Africa are very different from the industrial conditions of this country. I am not sure that we shall all be so convinced by the facts and figures given by the last speaker as to reject the figures given in the Census or the facts brought out by the special inquiry of the Board of Trade. The hon. Member told us, for instance, that in 1903 the Jewish Board of Guardians had 17,000 cases of relief before them, and in 1904 they had 23,000, and he said those figures showed there was an immense increase of the alien population. But he omitted to point out that the year 1904 was one of great trade depression, and surely it cannot be seriously contended that an increase of relief must be taken as an increase of population. In another part of his speech the hon. Gentleman referred to the numbers of aliens who had been refused a passage from this country, and wished the House to believe that these persons were left here to be absorbed in the population of this country. He told the House that 814 aliens in 1903 were refused a passage from England to the United States on the ground of probable rejections by the United States, and that in 1904 the number was 1,721. But the Report of the Board of Trade stated—

> "A special inquiry was made in 1904 with a view to ascertaining as far as possible what becomes of the aliens sent to London, and the evidence went to show that the great majority of these people eventually succeed in reaching their destination, sometimes after waiting for a time in London, but frequently without doing so."

In spite of their restrictive laws, immigration in the United States has absolutely doubled within the last four years, and has now reached 800,000 persons a year, whilst a further 90,000 persons emigrate annually to the Argentine.

Hon. Members object to immigration for three reasons. They say that immigrants become a public charge upon this country, that they increase disease, pauperism, and crime; they next say that they come over in great numbers and oust the native workmen from employment as well as lower the wages; and in the third place they say that as citizens the aliens are objectionable because they overcrowd the cities, they are given to insanitary habits, and they deteriorate the national standard of life. If all that were true their conclusion would be irresistible. I am not opposed to the regulation of immigration in all cases on grounds of principle. The Liberals of forty or fifty years ago would probably have adopted the *laissez faire* view, although, indeed, there is no word on the subject, so far as I am aware, in the utterances of the leading exponents of that school, of Adam Smith, Ricardo, Mill, Bentham, Cobden, or Bright. But if that had been the earlier view of Liberals, it would seldom be advanced now. In the cases of Australia and New Zealand there has been a considerable immigration of Chinese, and it has been said that these people could not be assimilated with the white population and that if this immigration is not checked it will make the population of the country more Mongolian than Anglo-Saxon. We cannot blame the Australasians for their measures of restriction. Then as regards the diseased, the criminal, and the paupers, a nation cannot reasonably be called upon to pay the cost of hospitals, workhouses, and gaols for its neighbours to fill; to maintain the unfit which its neighbours have evolved, or to feed the parasites which its neighbours have bred. But are these the true facts of the case? Take the paupers for instance. I asked the President of the Local Government Board for the percentages of the native and alien classes of pauperism. The answer was that amongst the alien population six per thousand, and amongst the native population twenty-four per thousand were paupers on a given day, or four times as many among the native as among the alien population. According to last year's Report on Emigration and Immigration, the total number of aliens relieved represented 0·22 per cent. of the total number of paupers relieved. The total amount spent in England and Wales in Poor Law relief is £13,000,000 a year, so that 0·22 per cent. represents £28,000 a year as the cost of alien paupers to this country as compared with the balance of £13,000,000 on the native population. Then take the question of insanity. The Commission reported that in London the insane amongst the aliens were 4·1 per thousand, as against 4·6 per thousand amongst the native population. Take again the question of disease, as to which there is certainly much contradictory evidence. But this is from the Report of the Royal Commission—

> "Dr. Williams is appointed by the Corporation of the City of London and discharges the duties of meeting the vessels and dealing with passengers suffering from infectious diseases. Answering a question as to the health of the immigrants on arrival in the Port of London, Dr. Williams said:—'As to their health, I should say it was fairly good. The number of cases of infectious diseases introduced that I have detected amongst these people has not

been numerous, speaking as a whole. I cannot say that much infectious disease has come into the country among these people.' This view was strongly supported by the evidence of Mr. Herman Landau, the president of the Poor Jews' Temporary Shelter, who stated that during the last six years only one case of sickness had occurred amongst the many thousands of immigrants who had been received in the Shelter. This statement was so remarkable that we sought for, and obtained, corroboration of it."

Mr. Hawkey, the Customs officer, who boards the ships when they leave the Continent, and comes over in them to this country, says—

> "It has very seldom occurred that I have known a case of illness."

It is on the point of crime that the indictment against the aliens is best founded. There is, unquestionably, a considerably larger proportion of crime amongst the aliens than amongst the rest of the population. Indeed, the proportion has risen so high that now no fewer than 15 per thousand of the alien population are criminals. But I ask the House to add together these elements, with regard to which it is possible to get exact statistics, and see what proportion they bear to the whole. Of paupers there were six per thousand on a given day; according to Mr. Charles Booth, whose authority on the question of Poor Law relief will not be disputed. If you double the rate of pauperism for a given day you get the figure for the whole year. Therefore, taking twelve paupers, four insane, and fifteen criminals, you have thirty-one per thousand immigrants who, taking one year with another, become a charge on public funds, and 969 per thousand who do not. My hon. friend the Member for the Elland Division was challenged when he said it would be taking a high figure to say that four per cent. of the aliens were undesirable; but according to the official figures under the heads of pauperism, insanity, and crime, the real figure would be slightly over three per cent. For disease it is impossible to get exact figures. As to these thirty-one per thousand, I say with all heartiness, exclude them if you can. I would warmly welcome any measure which would achieve that end. But these people are not labelled; they do not come to the ports bearing across their chests the legend, "I am a prospective pauper," and so forth. How can you possibly pick out the men who will become criminals, paupers, or lunatics? Take the criminals. The hon. Member for Stepney said that the difficulty of detecting these people was entirely fictitious. Can he detect criminals when he sees them? They are the class against whom the case is strongest, but in regard to whom this Bill will most completely break down. ["No."] We are all in favour of the expulsion clauses, and have been from the beginning. The hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite (the Member for Sheffield) says there will be no difficulty. He has had some experience of criminal investigations, but his authority cannot be set up against that of the witnesses who gave evidence before the Royal Commission. Sir Kenelm Digby said emphatically that it would be absolutely impossible to detect the criminals at the docks; Sir A. de Rutzen, chief Metropolitan magistrate, said the same; Sir E Bradford, ex-Chief Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, gave similar evidence in the most emphatic terms; and Mr. Henry, the present Chief Commissioner, also gave evidence to this effect.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I beg the hon. Member's pardon, but that provision is not in the Bill now; he is discussing the measure of last year.

***Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL**: I am afraid that that had escaped my notice, but doubtless Amendments will be moved in Committee with a view to excluding criminals, if possible. However I need not pursue the point, as there is agreement on both sides. Hon. Members who bitterly regret they did not carry the Bill of last year now admit that certain of our arguments against the measure were well founded. But in case this matter does come up in Committee I should like to state one fact of interest and importance in this connection. In the United States, where they have most complete and elaborate machinery for excluding undesirable aliens, during the last five years they have rejected 106 aliens on the ground that they were criminals—or twenty a year—but at the end of the five years they had in their gaols and reformatories 9,825 aliens. Hon. Members now admit that they cannot detect the criminal when he lands, but they say they will be able easily to detect the prospective pauper. There is no machinery yet invented which can reveal a man's character and capacity. It is absolutely impossible to say whether a man who comes over here with nothing in his pocket is not destined to rise to quite distinguished heights. But even if you do detect at the eight ports your thirty-one undesirables among the thousand immigrants and send them back, what will happen? If they wish to come to this country they will inevitably embark on a cattle boat or some other ship going to some other port. It is as though you tried to collect Customs duties by setting up Customs machinery at eight ports while allowing free admission at all others. The right policy with regard to undesirable aliens is the policy of expulsion. So far this Bill will undoubtedly do good, and if the Government would propose the expulsion clauses alone I think we would all give the Bill our benediction and use our best efforts to secure its passage.

Then with regard to employment. The hon. Member for Stepney laid great stress on the evil done by immigration by causing unemployment among English working men. That is one of the chief arguments in support of the Bill. Many people seem to think that any addition to the population must mean an increase in the number of the unemployed. They say that we have a certain number of unemployed, that there is not enough work to go round, and that if, by immigration or any other cause, so many thousand are added to the population it must mean the addition of so many thousands to the ranks of the unemployed. That theory is based upon a complete fallacy. No economist would accept such a doctrine for a single moment. Forty years ago when our population was 30,000,000 we had a certain ratio of unemployed; we have about the same ratio of unemployed now when the population is 12,000,000 greater. According to the theory often advanced the whole of those 12,000,000 ought to be swelling the ranks of the unemployed—a *reductio ad absurdum* which perhaps leaves nothing more to be said. On this point we have the specific declaration by the Royal Commission—the paragraph has already been read—that it has not been proved that there is any displacement of skilled English labour. On the other hand they say—

> "The development of the three main industries —tailoring, cabinet-making and shoemaking— in which the aliens engage, has undoubtedly been beneficial in various ways; it has increased the demand for, and the manufacture of, not only goods made in this country (which were formerly imported from abroad), but of the materials used in them, thus indirectly giving employment to native workers."

So that so far from displacing skilled workers alien immigration has given more employment by introducing new trades. On the question of wages, the Board of Trade presented to the Royal Commission a most interesting Return showing the changes in wages in certain trades during the ten years 1893–1902.

MAJOR EVANS GORDON: Is that Return No. 15?

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: It is in the Appendix, Return No. 16, and those which follow. Take cabinet-making and the boot and shoe trade. Take London, Manchester, Liverpool, and Leeds, where aliens chiefly go. With one small and temporary exception, in those places all the changes in the wages were increases —in those trades in which aliens were chiefly engaged in the ten years from 1893 to 1902. In face of these figures, how is it possible to declare that the effect of alien immigration has been to lower the rate of wages in those places? It has caused a large development in our export trade. In the tailoring trade our exports for apparel and slops increased by £1,300,000, or nearly 30 per cent., in ten years.

On the score of overcrowding the case against the aliens is strong. Whitechapel and St. George's-in-the-East have a percentage of over 50 per cent. of the people overcrowded, but in other districts where there are very few or no aliens like St. George's, Westminster, St. Saviour's, Waterloo, Christ Church, Marylebone, there is over 50 per cent. of overcrowding, and all these cases can and ought to be dealt with in the same fashion by a rigorous enforcement of the housing law, just as sweating can be dealt with by a proper adjustment of the industrial law.

I come lastly to the indictment that these people, who are mostly Jews from Russia, Poland, and Roumania, are bad citizens, and that this Bill should be passed if only in order to harry the immigrant and deter him from coming here. There is nothing harder than to assess the virtues of a race. Fifty years ago the Japanese were regarded as barbarians of a rather absurd type, but to-day the whole world stands in admiration of their efficiency and bows in reverence before their heroism. It is universally agreed that the Jewish race are a sober, industrious, domesticated, quick-witted people and easily assimilated; and, although many of the Jewish Reservists in Russia and Poland are refusing to fight in the Far East, it may interest the House to know that in the South African War the Jewish population of England lost a larger proportion of their number in the field than the rest of the English nation. A race which has given to Europe in modern times many of its greatest philosophers, statesmen, and scientists, poets, artists, and dramatists; a race which all through the dark ages kept alight the torch of learning, and from whose loins have sprung all the religions of the Western world—that race is not to be despised. Undoubtedly these immigrants have their faults, but if you oppress a people long enough and crush them deep enough, you are bound to give rise to certain vices and defects, and they will be found somewhat lacking in nobility of character. But they have a capacity for better things which soon shows itself, and if you give to these broken plants a little soil and water they will soon revive and they will not be the least useful and beautiful in your garden. I wonder what Disraeli would have thought of this Bill. On April 19th you covered his statue with flowers, but the day before that you introduced a Bill which might exclude from this country such families as his. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No, no!"] Indeed, if they were destitute and could not prove that they were able to earn their own living they would be excluded. A progenitor of Lord Beaconsfield was an alien, and there may have been many men who have risen to distinction whose fathers were destitute when they arrived in this country.

If the argument of hon. Members opposite with regard to employment and with regard to these aliens being bad citizens is true, then this Bill is totally inadequate. What difference will the rejection of one or three per cent. of undesirables make to your economic problems or to the question of citizenship? If the argument is untrue, then your Bill is an evil Bill, and you have no right to reject men who are doing you no harm, merely because they are poor. This Bill is too small to satisfy the expectations it has aroused, and it is much too large for justice. The agitation outside London is an artificial agitation designed solely for political purposes. Hon. Members opposite go down to villages which have never seen an alien and where they do not know whether he is fish, flesh, or good red herring. Politically speaking, he is a good red herring. Because the foreigner is unpopular, hon. Members opposite endeavour to play upon the anti-foreign feeling which always exists, and which has existed ever since the reign of Edward III., when a London mob slaughtered all the Flemings in Southwark who could not pronounce the words "bread and cheese." Many Acts such as this have been placed upon the Statute-book, but soon the nation has grown ashamed of them and one after another they have been swept away. The hon. Member for Stepney asked what was our policy, and what was the view of the Liberal Party? I am not authorised to speak for anyone but myself, but I think the view entertained widely upon these benches is that we should all be prepared to exclude the criminals, paupers, and diseased if possible, but even if we pass this Bill on that head we think it is impracticable. We are in favour of a measure of expulsion for dealing with these classes. I can imagine a tide of immigration so vast that it cannot be absorbed by the rest of the population and then you might have to introduce more restrictive measures, but that time has not yet come; you have no right to shut out oppressed people merely because they are poor. It is the grossest hypocrisy to pass resolutions of sympathy with the victims of misgovernment in Russia and when they fly to us for refuge to shut the door in their faces. If this Bill is passed it will be found that its administration will be beset with innumerable difficulties and it will soon become a dead letter. All the appeals to insular prejudice made by hon. Members opposite, all the gross misrepresentations with regard to the number of immigrants, and all the desperate attempts to enlist racial intolerance to the support of a declining Government will not overcome the attachment of this country to its old traditions of hospitality, and will not reconcile it to so grave a tampering with liberty.

*MR. H. LAWSON: It is somewhat fortunate that, as this is the first time I have addressed the House on a Government measure since my return for Mile End, to know that I speak, not only in the name of the majority, but of the whole of the constituency which has sent me back here after many years. It is instructive to me to learn that my opponent at that election, together with every other candidate and Member for East London on the Radical side, with the exception of one, have joined in a piteous appeal to the Leader of the Opposition to withdraw official sanction from the opposition to this measure. I shall, at any rate, have the satisfaction of knowing that in voting in favour of this Bill I shall go into the lobby with the whole body of East-End Members, Radical as well as Unionist. Whether the leaders of the Opposition will go into the same lobby I do not know, but as in this case the expediencies of electioneering seem to coincide with the dictates of justice, perhaps we may hope that their co-operation will also be secured. The hon. Member for Cleveland made a curious slip when he tried to score a point about Chinese labour. He claimed that the Radical Party were opposed to the immigration of the unfit because they were opposed to the immigration of Chinese in South Africa, but the hon. Gentleman did not state that if there were no Aliens Bill on the Statute-book there was nothing to prevent the importation of Chinese labour into this country.

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight): Yes, there is.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: This Bill will not prevent it.

*MR. H. LAWSON: Yes, it would, under the first clause. I want to grapple with an argument which, I think, is unworthy of the distinction of he right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean. He stated that the agitation in favour of this measure is based upon that damnable heritage from the Middle Ages—the spirit of Jew hating and Jew baiting, which we call Anti-Semitism. So far as I am concerned, being half a Jew myself, I can take no part in such a movement, nor can I vote in favour of a Bill founded on such obsolete and infamous passions. Happily, there has been no anti-Semitic feeling in this country. But if you want to create it, then you only need to burden the Jewish community with the scandal and odium attaching to the criminal. They have to bear, in the eyes of public opinion, all the reproaches which proceed with an unanimous voice from every bench of magistrates and every Court of justice. I was very much struck by the remark made at the Surrey Sessions by the Judge, who endorsed an observation of counsel that it was a great pity Members of Parliament could not spare the time to listen to cases of alien criminals. Unfortunately the alien criminals in this case belong to the Jewish community.

MR. STUART SAMUEL (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel): A large majority of the criminals have been shown in the evidence before the Commission to be Americans.

*MR. H. LAWSON: As a matter of fact one cannot argue these points at the present moment because the figures are not available as to religion. But there is no question that a great number of those now brought before the Courts of justice in London belong to the Jewish community, are unworthy members of that community, and create an evil which this Bill would do much to prevent. Cases that occur day by day and are reported are sufficient proof—and that is just because they are receiving the black sheep of their own community of which they are themselves rightly ashamed—and it is necessary in their own interest to do something to prevent the recurrent scandals which now occur. And, after all, if you want to see Anti-Semitic feeling it is not on these benches you find it. Those who read the Radical and Socialistic Press of London see more denunciation of Jews than you do in the organs that express the views of hon. Members on this side of the House. The Socialistic Press has often denounced the Jewish capitalists here and elsewhere as Jews. Since I have been in this House I have heard debates on South African affairs, and more than one denunciation of German Jews whose principal offence seemed to be that they belonged to the Jewish community—[Cries of "No"]—because, otherwise, what was the point of the declaration of their religion [Cries of "Hear, hear!"] except to excite prejudice? There is no question that those who have the longest heads and those who have most at heart the interest of English Jews are not opposed to this Bill, and in fact are anxious to see this stain removed from the fair fame of those for whom they care so much.

I do not think it is necessary to point out that apart from the question of criminals, Jews suffer from an invasion of people of their own faith whom they do not want to see here and who are an unnecessary burden. Mr. Joseph, who gave evidence before the Royal Commission, said there are thousands of immigrants who cannot be regarded as refugees, who are chronic paupers, and who come from Russia or Poland in the hope of getting something from the Russo-Polish fund of which they have heard such exaggerated accounts. That is one of the features most noticeable in this recent incursion of Jewish refugees. There have been more beggars in the streets, and more beggars, unfortunately, among children in the streets, and the reason is that you are getting the less fit and capable of these people. That is what we notice in the doctrinaire protests raised against this Bill. There is a want, on the other side, I fear, of the sense of historic perspective. They still seem to think that we are getting the energetic, the able, and the competent aliens. That was the fact in the past. Whether they were Walloons or Huguenots or Jews, we had formerly coming into this country those who were most likely to contribute to its prosperity. But now the exact opposite is the case. Now we are getting the untransportable—those who cannot get into America, and whom the shipping companies will not take to America. I have in my hand the last report of the North German Steamship Company, and it states that out of a total of 121,000 persons who were would-be emigrants from Russia, Germany, and Austria, the company themselves rejected, at the frontier control stations as medically unfit, 6,000 for various reasons, and that 2,164 were afterwards refused a passage at Bremen and Hamburg by the authorities there and the American Consul. In spite of these precautions eighty-nine reached the United States, whence they were promptly deported. That shows the class of people who are rejected by the steamship companies for deportation to the United States. One of the hon. Gentlemen who spoke this afternoon admitted that the regulations in America might have a deterrent effect in preventing undesirable aliens from going there, but he put it much too low. These regulations have a deterrent effect. That is the most important aspect of the whole matter. They exclude a great proportion. The figures with respect to rejections in America count for very little. It is not the number rejected, but the number held back, which must really be taken into account in this matter. Unfortunately, as we know, the greater number of those who are rejected in America come back here. I have got a case in point where there was a large number of aliens on board the liner "Carpathia" who were refused admission at New York. An attempt was made to land them at Fiume, but the Italian authorities objected to allow this, and these people came to England. Time after time the same thing occurs, and therefore you have this continual immigration of the unfit, and I think the Jewish community has great reason to complain of the undue burden cast upon their charitable funds.

The hon. Member for one of the Divisions of Yorkshire spoke of the figures of pauperism making out no case for the Bill. The hon. Member knows that a great number of people rely on the unillimitable generosity of men of their own kith and kin. The undesirable aliens come here as paupers, and it is merely on account of private charity that the rates are not more grievous. What applies to want of fitness or disease applies also to those who come here without means. A great number are reported to have practically no money at all. Five roubles, or 12s., appears to be the largest sum that any of the alien immigrants of this class ever bring into England, and the possessors of such a sum are looked upon as real capitalists. The case in regard to immigration in this country is summed up by the words used by the German officials at the ports of embarkation: "Utterly destitute and friendless who can just afford a ticket to Grimsby go to England." I think I have said enough as to the character of the immigrants. The truth is that we get the floating scum—those who would go anywhere and do anybody and those who are a burden to their own community, if not a burden to the public at large. These are the people who bring scandal on themselves and on those with whom they are associated.

It has been said constantly that the question is a small one. That may be so in area, but the intensity makes the grievance the greater. The right hon. Baronet said the figures made out no case for the Bill, but he forgot the figures of crime and immorality. He passed them by as of no account, and dealt solely with the figures furnished by the Board of Trade as to transmigration. We can place no reliance on the figures of the Census, and as little reliance on the figures of the Board of Trade. We have far stronger evidence as to the displacement of population going on in the East End, and in the Borough of Stepney in particular. The right hon. Baronet will admit that there is no better authority than Mr. Charles Booth, who went into the figures. He says—

> "It has been like the slow rising of a flood. Street after street is occupied. Family follows family."

I have taken the trouble to get information from the authorities of the Borough of Stepney. The officials there stated before the Royal Commission that over a hundred streets had gone into the possession of foreigners in recent years. These same officials state that the process is continuous. It is all very well for us to dogmatise about the displacement of population and the substitution of industries. An hon. Gentleman has spoken of new industries brought in by immigrants, but we know very well in the East End what that means. In the East End of London at the present time most of the streets are held on leases from individuals and corporations by single owners, and when these leases are assigned the whole of the people are turned out of their houses and the rents raised at least 50 per cent. So that none of those who were former inhabitants are able to remain. Practically a clean sweep is made. Those driven out are compelled to find shelter in new patches of blue and dark blue, as portrayed in Mr. Booth's maps, and they swell the area of poverty. It is those who are forced out of Stepney and the eastern districts that are creating the new cities of casual labour which are being reared around us and of which we hear so much in connection with the strike that is going on against the school rate to-day. It is stated that there has been recently a falling-off in rents of about 10 per cent. in the East End. Everybody knows that in the Borough of Stepney recently they rose three times as much as in any other part of London. Ten per cent., even if that is the true proportion, is a very small one, but that is not borne out by the statement of the borough officials. In the last report of the medical officer of health it is stated that the number of inhabited houses has diminished and that there is an increase in the population which tends to cause overcrowding. High rents cause overcrowding and overcrowding causes high rents. They act and react. That is the report for 1903, which is the last one available. Those who are on the spot, the municipal officers, say that the process of displacement is still going on, and that street after street is being denuded of its native population and filled up by those who are to all effects and purposes destitute persons, likely to lower the standard of living and to increase the distress of the East End.

It has been suggested that all this could be remedied if the local officers would pay more attention to their duties. Well, that is a most unmerited stigma on the public officers of health in East London. The magistrates who gave evidence before the Royal Commission said that the Public Health Acts are well carried out in East London, and I do not believe that there is in any part of the United Kingdom a greater effort to enforce the sanitary laws, in spite of great obstruction, than in the Borough of Stepney. But hon. Gentlemen said it was not the way to deal with sweating and overcrowding to pass a Bill excluding aliens. They said, "What you must do is to amend the factory laws." That is all very well, but if they refer to the suggested amendments to the factory laws it will be seen that these would involve a far greater interference with individual liberty than this House is ever likely to tolerate, at any rate for many years to come. If they wish to do away with sweating in the East End they must have a national minimum of wages. If they are ready to fix a minimum standard of wages it might be possible in the long run to do away with sweating, though I disagree, but without that they cannot touch it except by doing away with unrestricted immigration. The Rector of Spitalfields says that the aliens who come to this country are ready-made victims of sweating, and it is stated that many of the male alien immigrants with their families cannot earn more than 7s. a week. How is it possible, unless we fix a minimum wage, to do away with such a patent degradation of the standard of life and comfort among the working population in London? This is not an extreme Bill. The Government has had to steer carefully between the Scylla of exaggeration and the Charybdis of false sentiment, and they have produced a fair and workable measure. Hon. Members had spoken as if this were a Bill to put a stop to immigration. Not at all. It only deals with the incapable and unfit. The present situation is that we are sending out the fit and the strong and taking in the incapable and the helpless. If hon. Members studied the figures of immigration into Canada, they would find that the very flower of our working class was being sent out there, and in return we are getting those whom it is impossible to induce the United States to accept. And who are left here? The derelicts of Europe. It is no argument to say that this state of things has been evolved by the tyranny of foreign Governments. I do not think that we shall make that tyranny any less by showing that their victims can always come here and find a refuge. As to this country being an asylum for political offenders, this Bill will not affect one of those who have found refuge here in the past. The severe restrictions of the United States have never shut out a single Irish Fenian no matter how grave the charges against him. This Bill will not close the door upon the successors of Mazzini and Kossuth. The Home Secretary has put in a proviso to admit those who are fleeing from political persecution, and I hope that will also be extended to those who suffer from religious persecution. Then, I think, the whole basis of this argument, which is founded on false sentiment, will be swept away. One feels that this unrestricted flow will be likely to weaken and vitiate the whole stream of our national life. We talk of "man-power," but the man-power behind the Empire is not likely to be improved by the introduction of new diseases and the constant influx of people dumped down on this country because no other country will take them. This Bill is not only due, but in the view of those I speak for, is already overdue, and I think it is time that we cried "Halt" to what is becoming a backward march to physical degeneration. I hope the House will pass, by a very large majority, the Second Reading of what is a fair, workable, and practical measure.

MR. ASQUITH (Fifeshire, E.): I wish to explain my own view—a view which I have seen no occasion to modify, when I spoke on the Bill last year. I said then, and I repeat now, that I am not one of those who do not think there is no occasion for a change in the law. I pointed out, what is indeed proved by the Report of the Royal Commission, that there is undoubtedly an excessive percentage of crime among the immigrant alien population in this country as compared with the indigenous population. I think one cannot ignore the presentments of juries and the declarations of Judges, repeated from time to time, to the effect that prisoners coming into this country, relying on the privilege of hospitality, cannot complain, when they have abused that hospitality by the infringement of our criminal laws, if we cease to extend it to them any longer and send them back to their own country. In so far as this Bill either gives power, after judicial inquiry, to the Home Secretary to expel persons who have been convicted of crimes against our laws, or in so far as it enables him, again subject to proper appeal, to prohibit the introduction into this country of persons who have been convicted in their own native land of crimes which, according to our system of law, are extraditable offences—in so far as the Bill proposes to carry out these two objects, not only will it not receive my opposition but it will meet with my hearty support, offered, of course, I need not add, in that critical temper in which one ought to approach the precise form of legislation in which a problem of this character ought to be placed on the Statute-book. In so far as that part of the Bill is concerned I have nothing more to say.

Then we come to the other provisions of the Bill. And here I must say that comparing it with the measure of last year, I can hardly remember a case in which the opposition to it, so much criticised at the time, has been more completely justified. What were the main grounds of that opposition? I have been refreshing my memory as to what was said at the Second Reading of the Bill last year, and the position which some of us took up. So far as I was concerned, my main grounds of objection were two. In the first place I strongly objected to the provision which enabled the Local Government Board to set up a number of prohibited areas from which aliens, whatever their character, were to be excluded. That provision has been dropped; it does not appear in the present Bill. It was absolutely indefensible and unworkable. The second main ground for criticism which I mentioned last year was that behind it there was what I thought an almost revolutionary proposal. It vested in the Home Secretary executive power, by his own act, without the protection of any preliminary judicial investigation, without any regard to any law of evidence, which is the safeguard of our liberties, to refuse admission to alien immigrants and to expel them from this country. I point out that that provision is substantially dropped out of the measure now before the House. And what remains? There does remain a feature in this Bill which I regard as very objectionable, and which we shall do our very best to remove. It is the first provision of the third Sub-section of Section 1, which enables the Home Secretary or the immigration officer to refuse admission to an immigrant who "cannot show that he has in his possession, or is in a position to obtain, the means of decently supporting himself and his dependents." I agree with the right hon. Member for Forest of Dean that when you come to analyse the figures, the plea of urgency—if ever there was urgency for a measure of this kind—is less intense now than it was a few years ago. So far as I can make out, after careful investigation, the notion that there is anything in the nature of a steady and increasing influx of more or less destitute immigrants who are competing in the labour market with the British working man and ousting him from employment is one which does not stand the test of investigation. That there are special areas which suffer inconvenience I am not prepared to deny; but I am dealing with the broad general proposition, and I do not think, if you take the country as a whole, and the statistics as a whole, that any such case as that can be made out. That being so, it appears to me that this provision which enables an immigration officer to exclude an alien on the ground of poverty, and poverty alone, is both objectionable in principle, and will be found unworkable in practice. It is objectionable in principle because some of the best strains in our population were founded in days gone by by persons who could not have stood such a test. Mere poverty—it may be the result of persecution—in a person who comes to this country, of good character and prepared to contribute his stock of ability or intelligence to productive employment here, ought not to be a barrier to his coming. How are you to ascertain whether a man has in his possession, or is in a position to obtain, the means of supporting himself? The test can be evaded in a hundred ways, and will be evaded; and I do not believe, however skilful and energetic your immigration officer may be, that you will find that a test of this sort can be effectually applied, or that it will exclude any appreciable number of alien immigrants.

The hon. Member for Forest of Dean has called attention to the importance of preserving the right or privilege of asylum in this country, not only for the victims of political but of religious persecution also. I gather that the Government itself recognises the importance of this, but the words they have chosen seem to me totally inadequate, and would really mean the exclusion of a large number of refugees. Take these who have arrived during the last twelve months from Russia. I do not suppose that one in ten could show that they were seeking admission solely for the purpose of avoiding persecution. We want words that are far wider and more elastic if we are to carry out the common object of us all—which is that these unfortunate persons, victims of social and political prejudices, shall in the future, as in the past, receive free admission to our shores.

I come next to a provision which is a very substantial improvement upon the Bill of last year—that provision which enables an appeal from the Immigration Office to what is called the Immigration Board. But I am not at all satisfied with the composition and qualifications of this board, and I hope that a little more attention will be given to its constitution. One other point, and it is a very important one, is that of definition of the alien that is to be excluded by Clause 8. It is absolutely essential that provision shall be made for persons who make this country a temporary residence before proceeding to their ultimate destination. I think the word "immediately" ought to be struck out of the clause. In connection with this point, I may perhaps be allowed to relate a personal experience. Two months ago I was taken to the Jewish shelter in Whitechapel, where, for months past, a benevolent body of gentlemen have been devoting their energies to dealing with the Jewish refugees pouring into this country from Russia. I saw there three or four hundred of these men, and, if one might judge from their appearance and conversation, they were not in any sense undesirable aliens. All of them, or nine out of every ten, had come here, not as permanent settlers, but on their way to other countries. The great bulk were drafted to Argentina or Canada where they would find remunerative employment and engage in agriculture. On the other hand, this is a process which takes time. Many of them had been here two, three, or four months, but they had been perfectly well looked after and every possible provision was being made for their speedy movement to their ultimate destination. Certainly they would have been unable to bring themselves within the definition of this clause. And it is absolutely essential that provision should be made for persons of this class.

I am strongly of opinion that the expectations entertained by the Government, that if the Bill is carried into law it will effect important and drastic changes, are not founded upon probability, and I believe that the Bill when it comes to be put into practical operation will turn out, if not a dead letter, to have very little practical effect. In this belief I think I am justified by the experience of other countries. But, so far as I am concerned, I am not prepared to refuse it a Second Reading, although when it gets into Committee we shall press these points, which we consider of supreme and vital importance, with all the energy at our disposal.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: The right hon. Gentleman has told the House he is not opposed to any legislation on this subject. I gathered from his speech of last year and his speech to-night, that he is practically in favour of the second part of the Bill; that is to say, there is very little difference of opinion with regard to the power of expulsion which we seek with regard to criminal or undesirable aliens. The right hon. Gentleman asks me Questions with regard to the composition of the examining board at the ports. I entirely agree that there should be a magistrate always on that board, and it is the intention of the Government to make it so. We hope, and have reason to believe, that we shall receive considerable assistance from the Jewish Board of Guardians. We fully recognise the work they do for these aliens, and we are anxious to get their assistance and let them share in carrying out the regulations which will particularly affect their co-religionists. The Government feel that a magistrate should be brought in, as the matter could not be left to a Court of summary jurisdiction since we could not have a Court of summary jurisdiction always sitting. We hope to secure a magistrate on each occasion the board sits, and I am prepared to make it compulsory that a magistrate should sit on the board. We hope also to get the assistance of those who are accustomed to Poor Law administration.

The right hon. Gentleman has made an appeal to me on behalf of one class, namely, the immigrant who comes here in transit and who waits here until he is in a position to go to his future home. It looks as if the right hon. Gentleman wished to make the alien's time here as pleasant as possible—in fact that we ought to welcome him, that we should rather attract this kind of person. We have a great many transmigrants who come here and stay here, it may be for months, sometimes as long as a year or two years, and during the whole of that time they are obtaining benefits, it may be, from our hospitals and from our Poor Law. After they have obtained, by working at sweated wages, the necessary amount of money they then proceed to America. That class of man is not to be encouraged, because he practically comes here to work off his own "undesirability." That is perfectly true, and the alien could not go on in many cases until he had done that. He comes here and cures his diseases at the expense of our hospitals, or he is relieved by the Poor Law guardians, or by the Jewish Board of Guardians, and he receives a good deal of money and a good deal of attention from them, and in that way make himself a desirable alien, and so is accepted by the shipping companies. I think we must be very careful how far we allow men to work off their disqualifications in this country.

I turn to the point the right hon. Gentleman brought to my notice when he first addressed the House. He called into question certain figures which I had given in my speech on the First Reading of this Bill to show the necessity for it, and as showing that there was a greater need for it this year than last. I told the right hon. Gentleman that I had taken those figures from the monthly Returns of Alien Immigration. I hold in my hand that particular Return, and I find that the figures I gave are correct. According to that Return 195,000 was the total number of aliens who arrived in this country. From that number I took off 99,000 for the aliens who were en route, and from the balance I took off the number who were sailors, which reduced the figure which the right hon. Gentleman quoted to 82,000. I further said some further deduction must be made for those who went out of this country in driblets, but that I thought that the greater portion of those 82,000 did remain in this country. These figures are the same as those which appear in the Board of Trade Returns for the year. I had not seen the Board of Trade Return as I explained when I gave them; I gave them from the Alien Return.

Mr. STUART SAMUEL: Before he leaves that point might I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he has deducted the number of aliens who have emigrated from this country.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: Yes, as the hon. Member will see if he looks at page 39 of the Return, if he first makes a deduction of the transmigrants and then of the sailors. Then there must be deducted a further 7,000, because the Board of Trade officers say that the officers of Customs have ascertained that 7,000 or so have gone to other countries, but still there remain 75,000 as compared with 59,000 in 1903, and 58,000 in 1902.

MR. STUART SAMUEL: But the right hon. Gentleman has not taken off the number of aliens who have left this country again.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I am quite aware of the other contention that has been made, and the argument which the right hon. Baronet opposite draws from a comparison of the inward and outward "passenger lists." But so far as this Bill is concerned those figures are not relevant. They would be relevant if this Bill aimed at aliens generally, but this Bill is aimed at undesirable aliens who come over in immigrant ships. To ascertain the numbers of those it is right to go to the "Alien lists." The right hon. Baronet was kind enough to say in his opening remarks that he did not think I intended to mislead the House, but that my figures were not correct. I now show the right hon. Baronet that the figures I gave were those which appear in the Return. I admitted last year, and am quite ready to admit again, that these figures can be no good test, that it is impossible to obtain accurate figures of those who go out of this country in driblets, but the figures I have given are absolutely accurate so far as the aliens who come into this country are concerned. It is absolutely impossible to obtain with accuracy the figures of those who go out of this country, or whether those who come to this country and do not go out at once, go out at other times. That is the fallacy which I think underlies the figures given by the right hon. Baronet which are obtained from the inward and outward "passenger lists."

Now I do not want to detain the House unnecessarily, but there are several other figures which I have been asked for. There has, I think, been rather a disposition on the other side of the House to make out that there has been no increase in the number of aliens in this country during the last two or three years.

SIR CHARLES DILKE: Hear, hear!

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I join issue with the right hon. Baronet. What about the figures in regard to Poor Law relief and charitable relief? We find that in London poor relief was granted in 1902 to 3,234 aliens, and in 1904 to 4,162. Was there a greater period of distress?

SIR CHARLES DILKE: A greater number passing through.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: Even then there are a greater number of aliens in the country at the time. I have taken out the figures with regard to Poor Law relief granted in Cardiff, Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, and Sheffield, and I find that in 1902 relief was given to 1,381 aliens, and in 1904 to 1,685, so that there has been an increase here. With regard to the relief given by the Jewish Board of Guardians, figures given to me show that in 1902 17,790 aliens were relieved, and in 1904 22,859. All of these figures show that there were a greater number of aliens in the country. Whether passing through or permanently resident here these figures do not show, but at the time there has been a larger population here, and that is the case I have endeavoured to make out to show the necessity for the Bill.

I have already stated my views as to the undesirability of keeping the transmigrant long in this country. So far as our Bill is concerned we do not propose to interfere with the transmigrant. We want to put the fewest difficulties we can in the way of the shipowner who brings the transmigrant or the transmigrant himself, but I do not think we can take into consideration the plea put before us by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean that we should support the practice of allowing the transmigrant to come here, and stay long enough to describe himself as an emigrant from this country. I do not think that it would be in the interest of foreign countries to do so, because they would not be getting from here an English emigrant, but an alien who has come here and has stayed a short time for the purpose of qualifying as an Englishman, and has gone on again. We must make it clear in the Bill if necessary—I believe it is clear—but we must make it clear that the transmigrant who is not interfered with by the examination must have some definite means of showing, whether by his ticket or otherwise, that he is going through to the West or to America, and going through without undue delay. To show the amount of relief which these so-called transmigrants take, also the amount of cost which is put upon the charitable institutions and upon the rates in this country, let me take the figures which are given by the steamboat companies, or first of all by the authorities at Liverpool, to which place some of these people who go to America and are refused admission come back. We know that last year there was an increase, 352 were sent back in 1902 and 1,198 last year. Many of these were suffering from disease, others were lunatics, and they were sent back from America to Liverpool. Besides these, 814 foreign undesirables in 1903 and 1,721 in 1904 were refused passages from England to America by the steamship companies on the ground that they would be rejected when they got there. We have evidence that a certain number of them, but by no means the largest proportion, went to their homes, but a large number were sent to London, and a certain number remained in Liverpool. The vestry clerk in Liverpool said they had considerable expense cast upon them in respect of foreign lunatics sent back from the United States, who were dumped down in Liverpool and became a charge on their funds. The Chairman of Hospitals at Liverpool said exactly the same of the large amount of extra work and cost put upon these institutions in dealing with these aliens who have been sent back to Liverpool from America and have been left there. That raises a point with regard to another question. We shall have to create a staff at Liverpool, in addition to building up a staff at these eight ports. It will be necessary to deal with a case of this sort, and to see that these undesirable aliens are not dumped down in this country at the cost of the rates.

The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean thinks that this Bill is unnecessary, and that if we wish to deal with the evils which we say exist, and which many Gentlemen on the other side of the House admit do exist, in the East End of London, they can be dealt with by the stricter administration of the existing law, or by the extension of the Factory Acts, that sweating could be entirely stopped, and the chief evils now connected with the undesirable alien in the East End of London put an end to. I am afraid I cannot agree with the right hon. Gentleman. There is no doubt that an efficient factory inspection is desirable and is necessary; but I do not think that that alone would deal sufficiently with this question, nor would any extension of the law such as would be acceptable to the people at large. We have never attempted to deal with the hours of labour of adult males in this country. We have never interfered with adult male labour——

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Railwaymen's hours, and shop hours.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: We have never interfered with adult male labour in the sense of the Factory Act at all, nor have we ever had any legislation to compel employers to pay a certain rate of wages. Unless you have something of that sort you cannot stop the sweating of the undesirable aliens who land here with little or nothing in their pockets, who have no trade, and who have to go to the lowest grade of labour and get what employment they can. Therefore there is no law at the present moment nor are we likely to pass one which would deal with this question of sweating. But we propose to deal with this difficulty of the undesirable alien in the East End of London by effectively controlling his entry into the country, and I believe that that is the most practical way in which the difficulty can be met.

Another objection of the right hon. Gentleman is against interfering in any way with what is generally known as the right of asylum.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE: I did not use the word "right."

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: No. I was about to point out that there is no such thing as a "right" of asylum, but the practice which has existed of welcoming foreigners who were flying from political or religious persecution in their own lands. The right hon. Gentleman holds that we ought not to depart from a practice which has existed since the Middle Ages, when we readily welcomed a large influx of aliens from abroad. But I would like to point out that there is a vast difference between the class of undesirable aliens which this Bill proposes to deal with and the additions made to our population in those days. Not only were they not undesirable in the present sense of the word, but they brought with them arts and crafts, and set up many manufactures which have been of the greatest benefit to this country. They would not have been brought within the meshes of this Bill at all. Many of them, at all events the Huguenots—brought a considerable amount of money into this country, and, as every hon. Member who has studied those interesting immigrants knows, the French Ambassador wrote in 1687 to Louis XIV. that 960,000 louis d'or had been sent to the Mint for conversion into English coin. They were not at all on the same level as the people we wish to deal with. The right hon. Gentleman feared that *bona fide* political refugees would not be able to come into this country. It is certainly not the intention, nor do I think under the operation of the Bill it would be the fact, that such refugees should be kept out. The right hon. Gentleman stated last year that so excellent citizens who came to this country as Dalou, the sculptor, and the brothers Reclus, the geographers, would have been excluded, but I do not think they would have been caught by the meshes of this Bill, because they would have been able to show that they were skilled artisans, or were perfectly well able to maintain themselves, and that they would not in any way become a charge on the country. We have put in a clause which safeguards, as we think, the genuine political refugee, and the right hon. Gentleman admits that it constitutes an improvement on the Bill of last year. But he says that we do not go far enough. That question can be considered in Committee, but we must be careful in framing words to deal with the point not to allow the whole Act to be evaded by people coming here and saying they are suffering from political persecution.

The hon. Member for the Cleveland Division seemed to think that the Government and Members on this side were creating an Anti-Semitic movement. I disclaim any such intention, and I am certain that that is not the desire of any Members on this side of the House.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: I did not wish to imply that.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: One reason why I am anxious to get a settlement of this question of the regulation of the entrance of undesirables into this country is that I believe that if this grievance continues there is a chance in ignorant quarters of an Anti-Semitic movement arising.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: I did not wish to make any such imputation.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I am very glad the hon. Member does not impute to the Government or to myself any such intention.

We are told that this Bill by its provisions will not keep out the undesirable immigrant. That is not the impression of those who drafted or introduced the Bill. We believe that this Bill will have a very considerable effect in its actual operation, but we also believe that, as in the case of other countries, the passing of a Bill like this will have a further effect of a deterrent kind. Those who know the working of the Immigration Acts of the United States are aware of the great deterrent effect they have. What we are most anxious to guard against is the liability to which we are at present exposed of finding ourselves saddled with the worst and most undesirable aliens, while the better class only come here to qualify themselves for proceeding further. The second part of the Bill, dealing with the expulsion of criminal aliens, has been received on all sides of the House with approval; and I, therefore, need not say anything with regard to it except that it is admitted that there has been a considerable increase in the alien criminal population in our prisons, and that I constantly receive complaints from Judges, chairmen of quarter sessions, and police magistrates of the amount of work that is cast upon them by the indiscriminate welcome which we give to alien immigrants. The right hon. Member for East Fife pointed out to me last year that the Chief Magistrate and the Commissioner of Police were doubtful as to the efficacy of the measures we proposed; I can assure him that the Chief Magistrate is not only satisfied with the terms of the Bill this year, but thinks it both desirable and workable. I do not think there are any other questions I need deal with at this stage of the Bill; other points have been raised, but they are purely Committee matters and can be better dealt with then. I, therefore, will only express the hope that the House will, if not unanimously, at any rate by a large majority, pass the Second Reading of a Bill which I am sure will go a great way to meet the difficulty presented by the immigration of undesirable aliens.

Mr. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire): I desire to ask for information on one point, viz., whether, under this Bill, there will be power to expel the foreign women who infest our streets, and the vile men who live upon their earnings? If not, the Bill will fail to touch the very worst feature of the question. You talk about undesirable aliens. Are there any aliens so undesirable as these foreign women? They are absolutely irreclaimable; many of them have been expelled from their own countries, but here they crowd the streets, and we have no means of dealing with them. Unless the Bill provides a clear and precise method of procedure for dealing with this great social evil it will fail altogether. But if we get an assurance that the Bill will deal with this class, I, for one, will gladly vote for it.

Mr. HAYES FISHER (Fulham): With regard to the point raised by the hon. Member for Flintshire, I hope that in Committee my right hon. friend will insert words such as appeared in the Bill of last year, under which there would be some chance of relieving our streets of a number of these foreign prostitutes, and more especially of those who live on the proceeds of prostitution.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS made an observation which was inaudible in the reporters' gallery.

Mr. HAYES FISHER: I had the impression that the words were not in this Bill, or that they were not so clearly stated as in the Bill of last year. At all events, I take it that if they are not in, my right hon. friend will promise to have them or some such words inserted in Committee. A provision of that character and with that object is in almost every regulation which the various Colonies have for dealing with alien immigration.

In joining the hon. and gallant Member for Stepney in welcoming this Bill, I should like to say that we who sit for constituencies in the far West of London consider that this is not only an East End question, but a London and a national question. I frankly admit that if you could take the whole of the alien population and distribute it amongst all the towns and cities in the United Kingdom it might not be a problem calling for legislation or one that could not be borne. But just as one river could carry a certain amount of sewage, but not the sewage of the whole kingdom, so one portion of London cannot carry the whole of the pauper and diseased alien immigration which comes into this country. I am delighted to hear that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife is going to vote for the Bill.

Mr. ASQUITH: Oh, no; I did not say so.

Mr. HAYES FISHER: I certainly understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that he would.

Mr. ASQUITH: I said I would not oppose. ["Hear, hear!" and laughter.]

Mr. HAYES FISHER: The right hon. Gentleman has at any rate advanced upon his statement with reference to the Bill during the recess, when he described it as claptrap and gallery play.

Mr. ASQUITH: So I say still.

Mr. HAYES FISHER: I think the right hon. Gentleman will find that the Bill is not so regarded in the country, if he asks the hon. Member for Poplar.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I have always said that the Government are using this measure as a shop-window Bill.

Mr. HAYES FISHER: The petty improvements suggested by hon. Members opposite could all have been put into the Bill of last year, because they were actually put down by my right hon. friend the Home Secretary, and if we had not spent six days debating three lines in Committee we should have had ample time to consider those Amendments.

I should like to enforce one or two arguments put forward by the hon. Member for Stepney. The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean thinks that the figures show that there is no case for this Bill. But the supporters of this Bill can afford to throw those figures over. No figures were relied upon by the Select Committee of 1888 and the Royal Commission of 1902, and the latter came to the conclusion that the only approach to accuracy was to be found in the figures of the Census Returns, which showed that the number of aliens in this country had doubled between 1881 and 1901. They had a right to conclude from the criminal statistics that there had been a large increase in the number of aliens. Those figures at any rate were accurate, and it was only the other day that my right hon. friend quoted statistics which showed that the criminal alien population of this country had exactly doubled within the last five years. If the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean was right in his contention that there are only a few foreign aliens taking up their residence in this country, it seems to me than an enormous proportion must, sooner or later, come into our gaols. There is no doubt that recently there has been a great increase of foreign alien immigration, and a still more serious increase of foreign criminal immigration. I understand from the speeches of some hon. Members opposite that they would not object to this Bill if it gave power to export foreign criminal aliens from this country. That remedy is not needed, and it would merely be an aperient for the disease. Why should we not, in regard to this question, have similar powers to those possessed by the United States and almost every one of our Colonies? We shall have to consider the future, and legislation will be required to meet the probable large increase of pauper alien immigration. I know that in the seventeenth century we practically said, "Let them all come," but even then regulations were made to distribute the alien population, and they were sent away from London into the country because they were too thick on the ground, and they were sent to Norwich and many other places.

There are three great causes at work which will tend to increase the number of aliens coming to this country. In the first place, in the near future you are likely to see a very great exodus of undesirable aliens from other countries. Secondly, those countries which are not at the present moment actually congested, and where there is ample space for emigrants, are tightening up their laws and shutting their doors upon these aliens, and they will necessarily be driven to this country. In the third place owing to our more humane Poor Law—and the whole tendency is to make it still more humane—London has become a very desirable city for these foreign aliens. Figures or no figures, the Report of the Royal Commission, and the evidence of our own Census, has made out a strong case for this country taking similar steps which other countries and our Colonies have taken to regulate and control the immigration of pauper aliens. I have no idea that we are going to make a new heaven and earth by this Bill, or that it will make Stepney into such a place as I would like to represent, but at the same time I feel convinced that if the House of Commons passes this measure into law it will have the effect of expelling thousands upon thousands of criminal aliens and bad characters who now infest us, who cause a great increase in our taxes for keeping up gaols, and who lower the whole tone of life amongst our people. The very note of warning which this Bill will sound will send many of these people away. I believe also that you will reduce, if you do not altogether free yourselves from, those aliens who come here diseased and give to other people the diseases which they have contracted in the countries they have left. In regard to pauper aliens, I am certain we shall largely reduce the number of undesirables. I do not think we ought to press the case of poverty too hard. I think there ought always to be a leaning towards those men whose character, so far as can be ascertained, shows that they are likely to turn out good citizens in this country, but at the same time we must look to the people at home and to the fact that certain people who come here will soon place themselves on the Poor Law and aggravate the burdens our own people have to bear. We must look to the fact that we find ourselves faced with social problems at home, and I think we have a right to protect our own citizens in a way similar to that which has been adopted in the United States and in our Colonies.

MAJOR SEELY: As one who was opposed to the objectionable features of the Bill on a previous occasion, I trust that the House will forgive me if I intervene and state why I intend to support the Amendment of my right hon. friend the Member for the Forest of Dean. After all, the hon. Member for Fulham has pointed out, and the right hon. Gentlemen in charge of the Bill has stated that we in this House are entirely agreed as to expelling the criminal. There is no doubt whatever that most of us desire to keep him out if it is at all possible to do so. Our only doubt is as to whether it can be done. We desire to keep out prostitutes and those who live by prostitution, but where we really differ is in the definition of "undesirable alien." Now, if I may venture to put it in a nutshell, the point is this. This Bill proposes to keep out a Jew when he is poor, and to admit a Jew when he is rich. I thought that probably hon. Members would not appreciate that way of putting it. The undesirable is to be excluded if he cannot show that he is in possession of, or is in a position to obtain, a decent way of supporting himself. I do not take the view of some hon. Members. I do not wish to keep out Jews or anybody, provided they are neither criminal nor diseased. But if you are going to keep out the one or the other, I am not sure that it would not be wiser to keep out the rich Jew and admit the poor Jew. I confess there is much to be said for the view I have ventured to put before the House. It is admitted that there is a great evil in the East End of London—an evil which we all deplore—but that it is confined to London is conclusively shown by the Report to which the right hon. Gentleman has referred. If hon. Members will look at the part in regard to aliens relieved they will see that the number is so trivial as to make it obvious that we shonld not sacrifice the great principle of asylum for so small a matter. The hon. and gallant Member for the Central Division of Sheffield was responsible some years ago for the Merchandise Marks Act. I think this Bill is very likely to have a similar effect. It will do no real good for the purpose for which it is intended, but it will gravely injure the shipping interest.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: Does the hon. Gentleman suggest that the Merchandise Marks Act injured the shipping trade?

MAJOR SEELY: I do not suggest that it has injured the shipping trade. I say that that legislation which the hon. Gentleman supported with the view of keeping out foreign goods has advertised those goods and defeated the object he had in view, and I say that probably the result of this measure will be to do little good and much harm to a flourishing industry. Other countries have tried to do what is now proposed, and their efforts have resulted in total failure. Many hon. Members have pointed to what has been done by the United States. They made much of the fact that the United States sent people back. It is obvious that they have not read the Report issued by the Board of Trade as to emigration and immigration. That is not to be wondered at, seeing that it has just come out. If they will turn to page 9 they will find the following—

> "Special inquiry was made by this Department in May, 1904, with the view of ascertaining, so far as possible, what becomes of the aliens sent to London, and the evidence obtained at that time tended to show that the great majority of these eventually succeed in reaching their desired destination, sometimes after a preliminary period of waiting in London, during which medical treatment is obtained at the hospitals and dispensaries, but frequently without such interval."

I think that shows how tiny an effect the measure can have in curing the admitted evils. The evils are great, but the problem is a much deeper one than an alien problem and cannot be dealt with by this method. If once we admit the principle of the Bill, we abandon one of the highest principles on which the State has been built up. I will never abandon it. I agree with the right hon. Baronet that the evils which exist are not concerned alone with alien immigration. The evils are particularly concerned with sweating, long hours, and crowded houses in the East End. These cannot be dealt with by the present measure. We are all agreed as to the keeping out of the criminal, but we are not agreed about keeping out a man because he is poor. I shall support the Amendment as a protest against that portion of the Bill. It is not wise for a Christian people to begin this sinister form of legislation. We can now say that where a man is naked we clothe him; when he is a stranger we take him in. We have not done badly, and I for one will heartily oppose any attempt at legislation such as this.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I take a somewhat different view of this Bill from that taken by some hon. Members on this side of the House. I supported the Second Reading of the Bill last year believing that the Government were in earnest in regard to this question. I think experience shows that at that time the Government did not very much care whether the Bill passed or not. The Bill now before the House is, in my opinion, a better measure than that of last year. I am bound to say that, although I rather objected at the start to the great opposition with which the Bill of last year was met, I am glad that that opposition was developed, because I believe that the present Bill affords an absolute and complete justification of the opposition of last session, for every objection, with one exception, taken to the Bill then before the House has been either met or attempted to be met in the provisions of this measure. Now, I have no desire to exaggerate this question. I have regretted to observe, both inside and outside the House, an attempt to make this a very big question. It is not a very big question, though it affects very materially certain parts of the kingdom. I do not know anybody who supports the Bill who would contend that, if the aliens were distributed throughout the whole of the Kingdom, there would be any grievance, or that there would be any need for legislation. The two reasons which lead me to support the Bill are, first, that we are getting left in the country, year by year, a worse class of aliens than was the case some years ago; and, secondly, that the aggravated position and congestion in those districts where the grievance is particularly felt is certainly not diminishing, but is becoming worse year by year.

There are three points in connection with this Bill to which reference has been made. First, the principle of asylum; second, the question of criminals; and third, the question of economic undesirables. I entirely agree with my right hon. friends the Member for the Forest of Dean and the Member for East Fife on the question of the admission of political immigrants, and I believe that in Committee the Government will be prepared to give the most favourable consideration to Amendments moved from any quarter of the House, designed to protect the right of asylum as far as possible. We are all agreed as to the desirability of excluding the criminal alien, but it is in regard to the uneconomic and undesirable alien that I join issue with some of my hon. friends. I feel very strongly that the present admission of these uneconomic and socially undesirable aliens requires regulation and discrimination, and that it is time some entrance standard was set up. The only class of immigrants to which I have any strong objection are Russians and Poles, who, unfortunately, are coming into the country in greater numbers year by year. I am quite certain that very few of them add to the strength, the wealth, or the welfare of the nation. I am sure there is no feeling in regard to this matter because these Russians and Poles happen to be Jews. The question of race does not arise. The objection we have to them is that they are in a totally different state of civilisation from what we desire in this country; that neither in race, religion, feeling, language, nor blood are they suitable or advantageous to us, and that they are by far the most destitute of all the aliens who come to these shores. The most serious matter, and the real argument for this Bill, is that this particular class of immigrant has been increasing year by year. The figures in relation to them are so remarkable that they fully justify the introduction of the Bill. Taking the last ten years—the figures for the last twenty years would have been still more striking—I find that, while, of the total of 28,000 immigrants in 1894, 7,500 were Russians and Poles, last year the number of Russians and Poles had increased to 46,000 as against an increase to 49,700 of all the other nationalities. That is to say, while the better class of immigrants to which there is no objection had not doubled, the worst Russians and Poles had multiplied six-fold. Those figures show that the time has come when some discretion should be exercised in regard to the admission of these immigrants. Then it is said that some of the number were in transit to America and it would be a pity to interfere with them. That is true, but it means that the best class of immigrants possess sufficient funds to take them on to America, whereas those less efficient and less enterprising are left in this country to do us harm. The regulations in America are so strict that they will not take anything approaching the class of immigrant to which we are now accustomed. We get from the East of Europe the refuse of the immigrants. I confess it looks to me that the time has come to check this great influx of the worst class.

I agree that certain remedies are to be found in the efforts to deal with sweating, housing, and the conditions of labour, and that they are steps in the right direction. Speaking for those in the East of London, I can say that it is not the competent or the ordinarily intelligent alien to which we object. We object to the class of alien which cause the lowering of the rate of wages and of the social position of the worker; which lead to overcrowding and all those evils, to remedy which this House endeavours to apply itself. This Bill is a considerable step in the way of the social reform we all have at heart. One of the greatest difficulties with which we have to contend is the addition from time to time of the lowest class of labour workers who will not join a trade union and who come over here ignorant, poverty-stricken, and very likely not even knowing the language. That is the class of immigrants that breaks down the rate of wages. It is these aliens who are the despair of the trades unions and the Government officials. Inspector after inspector in their reports have come to the conclusion that one of the greatest difficulties in the carrying out of the Factory Acts is found where this kind of alien has to be met. One or two hon. Members have argued against the Bill because a considerable number of aliens do not come upon the rates. I should prefer them to come upon the rates rather than drive the British working men upon them, as is the case in a large number of trades at the present moment. The Royal Commission, although they did not say that the men employed in skilled trades are actually driven out of work, did say that the competition of the alien has very largely displaced British labour in London.

Whilst not desiring an entire exclusion of aliens, I say that we are entitled to ask that there shall be some discrimination in the way that they are at present admitted into this country. To my mind the real advantage of this Bill is not the exclusion of the particular individual when he is landed from the ship, but the discouragement it will give to the ordinary alien on the Continent to come here at all. We want to put up the notice that "In future no rubbish will be allowed to be shot here," and we shall put the onus of the calculation and the cost of taking back the alien to whom objection is found on the shipping companies. What we want and what America already has is a sort of filter of the alien before he is landed. America has a three-fold system. In the first place the cost of the fare to America is sufficiently considerable to ensure that deterrent and discrimination which is so desirable. Then there is great discriminaation shown by the shipping companies themselves. The result is that the best emigrants are selected by the shipping companies for the United States and the residue left over are sent to England. I want it to be understood abroad, as it is understood in regard to America, that aliens will not be received unless they come up to some standard of fitness. So far as London is concerned the evil is very serious, and unless a remedy is found for it we shall find the foreign element increasing to so great an extent that a large portion of London will be practically uninhabitable except by these foreigners. Twenty years ago the percentage of foreigners in Whitechapel was 12 per cent.; now it is nearly 40 per cent., and other parts of London are suffering in the same way. I think that any practical step in the direction of reducing the number of these aliens will be a great advantage to the community at large. I cannot vote for the Amendment because it is directed against the Second Reading of the Bill. I shall therefore vote for the Second Reading in the hope that the Government will in Committee amend the Bill in many of the directions indicated by my right hon. friend the Member for East Fife.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): I have never yet spoken on this subject, and do not now propose to speak at length; I hope to conclude my few observations before the House adjourns for the interval. I confess that what I have heard of the debate leaves me in considerable difficulty as regards appreciation of the position of hon. Gentlemen opposite. It seems to me that they can hardly have appreciated the principle of the Bill. We have heard the details of the subject excellently treated by the hon. Member for Poplar, but we have not heard anything of what, to my mind, is very much more important—of the principle which underlies the Bill and makes the Bill only a step towards much greater things. This Bill is defended partly because, as we are told, these aliens are undesirable, because they are frequently diseased and often criminal. I am not inclined to lay the slightest stress on these points, though I do not doubt that there is evidence to show, and that facts do show, that they bring a larger proportion of diseased and vicious persons into our midst than would be the case with ordinary immigrants. But the principal reason why this Bill is brought on and why it is supported by all of us is because it is an effort to protect the working classes of this country against the labour, the underpaid labour, of a class of immigrants sent here. After all, then, we see that the other side have made some progress in regard to fiscal reform. The step, a very small one, between a Bill which keeps out this low class of labour, which prevents it being brought in to reduce the wages and lower the standard of life of the working-class population in this kingdom—the step is very little indeed to another Bill which I hope will be introduced before long to prevent the goods these people make from coming into the same competition. That being so, as it clearly is, I should have expected that the Opposition would have taken the line they took on a former occasion. I should have expected that they would vote against the Bill unanimously, as they would against anything that interfered with the delights of the free import system. I should have thought that they would have known, and would have acted on the knowledge, that it is as vicious to interfere with the free importation of men as with the free importation of goods. I do not for a moment blame them for the action they took, though I was surprised at the part some of them took, especially those who claim to be the representatives of labour, though I have never seen the slightest ground for the assumption that they represent labour in any more competent sense than other Members who are returned for working-class constituencies—still I say, on that assumption, I was surprised to find that three so-called labour representatives voted against the Bill and all the rest kept away.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): That is what you always do now when you are in a tight place.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I am grateful to the hon. Member for an explanation of the reason for their conduct. He and his friends were in a tight place, then? They flattered us by following our example. I am quite satisfied with that admission, and will not ask anything further as to the position of labour representatives. But now I want to ask why other Members who do not claim that title in any special sense, why they, having voted against the Bill on the former occasion, are going to vote for it now? On the last occasion they voted against the Bill; why do they vote for it now?

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: It is a different Bill.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, but the arguments are not different. I think there are other hon. Gentlemen in a tight place. We ask the question, but we do not care whether we get an answer or not. We know the reason. We know perfectly well that in this matter the working people of this country have been too strong for the free importers. There is a grievance here of which it has been truthfully said it is only local, though it affects more localities than hon. Members opposite choose to admit, but while it affects most seriously that district in which every Member and candidate has already been converted, it is beginning to affect other districts than the East End of London, including my own constituency, when the working men begin to complain of the kind of competition of which we also complain when we put before you a programme for giving greater and better-paid employment in this country. They complain that it is not fair competition. The Commission reported that the competition does not materially interfere with skilled labour, and I am not certain that if it did there would be the same reason for keeping it out. If the immigrants, like the Huguenots of the seventeenth century, taught us new trades, new skill, then indeed we might welcome them, but the competition is against unskilled labour, which is the first to suffer from non-employment. We know that when the Board of Trade, in the *Labour Gazette*, shows that there are 2 or 3 per cent. of the members of a great trade union out of employment, it is of no importance whatever as compared with the number of unskilled labourers which are at the same time thrown out of employment. It is on the unskilled labour the want of employment falls heaviest and first, it is upon the unskilled labour, the casual labour, that this immigration produces the greatest mischief. It must be so; the immigrants come in to compete with our labourers and work at wages they could not earn in their own countries.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: They are protected countries.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: They come in to earn wages they cannot earn in their own country; and I believe that is more truly the reason than the allegations of persecution upon which hon. Members have laid much stress. They come in and they take up work which up to recent times was in possession of the working men of this country, not skilled labour, but that kind of labour which is most urgently required; and they do not themselves benefit by the continuance of the immigration; with the constant influx of these people they cannot do what they otherwise might to improve their position. If by earning a few shillings a week for a short time they remained and gradually raised the level of payment there would be less to complain of; but there is no chance of that because they are followed by fresh tides of immigrants. It is often said that anybody who looks at this question as I do, entirely from a British point of view, is guilty of Anti-Semitism. There is no feeling of Anti-Semitism in the movement against this immigration. I remember speaking with Lord Ferdinand Rothschild on the subject; he is a most munificent donor to Jewish charities, and he told me that he was alarmed lest by chance the movement should turn in that direction; but he admitted that it was not in the interest of those who thought with him to encourage the immigration, because the result would be that what at present was purely and entirely an economic grievance might become a national grievance. So I believe we are the best friends of those poor Jews who are here in preventing their lot being made worse. But I rose chiefly to point out to the House—as I shall point out to the country and probably to future Houses of Commons—that we have taken the first step; we took it when we passed the Fair Wages Resolution. But what was the meaning of that, if now we do not take the second? By the Fair Wages Resolution no Government order can be given to any man who does not pay fair wages. No order, therefore, can be given for any product of these underpaid aliens. You who are anxious to keep aliens in this country, and encourage them to come by leaving the country open to them, vote against giving them work when they come here. The two things go together. If you are anxious to receive the poor aliens, you must be ready to accept them under their necessary conditions, and you must find them work, even though it does not fetch the fair wages you have demanded for it. The whole of our action, at any rate, is based on the belief that the time has come to protect the working man in his employment. We agreed with you in the Fair Wages Resolution, and with the same object we agree with this Bill. As I have said, I believe there is absolutely no logic in saying that these men may not come in, but shall remain in Hamburg or Poland, and there produce the goods which you would refuse to take from them if they made them in this country.

*Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham): The right hon. Gentleman has made a speech to which we have all listened with the greatest interest, but I do not know that the Government will thank him for it. The Home Secretary certainly did not present the view of the case that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham has done; in fact, the right hon. Gentleman appears to have let the cat out of the bag, in words which cannot be palatable to the

Government, or to free-traders on that side of the House, or to my hon. friend the Member for Poplar who has just declared his intention of supporting this Bill, which we are now told is a protectionist Bill, founded on the principles of protection which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham desires to introduce into this country. It is true it is only a small step, but we are told it is a step in the right direction, and it is on that ground and that ground alone the right hon. Gentleman supports it. As usual, the right hon. Gentleman's intervention in the debate has attracted a certain number of votes to our side, or, at any rate, has prevented a certain number of Members from voting for the Bill who otherwise would have done so. How refreshing it is to hear the right hon. Gentleman unmuzzled! And how refreshing it is to him to be unmuzzled! He has not run away to-day as he has run away before, but he is in his place to speak for and to present his brief in support of the Bill. I should like to ask if the——

And it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

ALIENS BILL.

[Second Reading.]

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment to Question [2nd May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was—

"To leave out all the words after the word 'that' and add the words 'this House holding that the evils of low-priced alien labour can best be met by legislation to prevent sweating, desires to assure itself before assenting to the Aliens Bill that sufficient regard is had in the proposed measure to the retention of the principle of asylum for the victims of persecution.'"—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*Mr. EMMOTT, continuing his speech, said: It will be interesting to the House to know whether the reasons which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham gives for supporting this Bill, as a step in the direction of protection, recommend themselves to the Prime Minister, and whether the Prime Minister is going to recommend those grounds to the House for the passing of the Bill. Why is it that these aliens come to this country at all? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham said it was because they got better wages. Why do they get better wages? Is it not because the conditions in this free-trade country are better than in the protectionist countries? But if hon. Gentlemen opposite knew that the exclusion of aliens was not only desirable but necessary, why was not this Bill brought in earlier, why did not the right hon. Gentleman urge the introduction of this Bill at an earlier period? The right hon. Member for West Birmingham taunted the Opposition with having changed their view, but has he not changed his view? Was he, in 1894, in favour of this measure because it was the first step towards protection? He certainly did not advocate it then on those grounds and therefore I take it that was not his view. So far as I am concerned I frankly admit that I have changed my views during the last twelve months. I was not here during the debate twelve months ago, but had I been here and had I been asked to vote aye or no I should have gone into the lobby in support of the Bill. I have changed my views, and am going to support the Amendment of my right hon. friend.

I maintain that we have a perfect right to exclude aliens from this country if their presence is undesirable. I go further and say it is our duty to exclude them if their presence here interferes with the well-being of our own people. I admit also, as I think all Members who have spoken from this side of the House do admit, that the Bill of this year is a better and more workable Bill than that of last year, and I maintain that the obstruction of last year has been amply and abundantly justified by the changes which have been made in the Bill as against that of last year. I may be asked, therefore, why I oppose or criticise the Bill of this year. I will give the answer in one sentence. It is because of the extraordinary weakness of the case made out on behalf of the Bill. Every supporter of the Bill on the Unionist side of the House has thrown over the statistical side of the case, they have been obliged to resort to prophecy, to foretell what is going to happen in the future rather than what is happening at present. They have evolved out of their own inner consciences an imaginary case, a case not supported by statistics or facts on the floor of this House. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary rested his case on certain figures, which he gave to the House. Now, I can quite understand hon. Members opposite magnifying a small case into a very large one for electioneering purposes, and if that is their position now it is merely part of the game of Party politics, and I do not blame them for that in the slightest degree. But when a case is so bad that the Minister in charge of a Bill has to rely on figures and statistics so misleading that any fool with five minutes study can discover the fallacy of them, then surely the case for the Bill is damned and the Bill itself shown to be a very bad specimen of window dressing. In introducing this Bill the Home Secretary rested his case on an import of 82,000 immigrants who were not stated to be going directly out of this country. Now I want to know whether the Home Secretary when he made that statement had read the paragraph on page 10 of the Paper presented to us yesterday showing how small was the balance of immigrants over emigrants. Did the Home Secretary know of that paragraph or not? It is only possible to suppose that he did not, because if he did, by the figures he gave he would have been intentionally deceiving the House, and that I cannot and will not believe. But if he did not know of it then we cannot do otherwise than accuse the right hon. Gentleman of culpable ignorance on a matter of great importance so far as this question is concerned.

What is the case that has been made out for the Bill? It is said first of all that the excess of foreign aliens has depressed the wages of the working people of this country, but there is ample evidence to show firstly that these aliens have brought new trades with them, and secondly there is ample evidence to show that where they have competed with our working population there has been an increase in wages and a decrease of hours in the trades in question quite as great as in other trades. Another ground for this Bill is that the introduction of these aliens leads to sweating, but there is evidence to show that the result of their coming into this country has only been that there have been new sub-divisions of labour and that the sweating does not arise from their competition but from the competition of women. It is the blackleg of our own country rather than the alien of others who is to be blamed for the sweating that exists. I consider the action of the Labour Members in this House contrasts very favourably with that of hon. Members opposite upon this Bill; they have had a very difficult part to play, and they have spoken with great courage in a situation which might have easily led them to display the white feather. With regard to the figures of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, they have been sufficiently dealt with by my right hon. friend the Member for the Forest of Dean. There was, however, one figure which he did not allude to. The right hon. Gentleman said the immigrants for the first three months of this year were 14,000 in excess of the immigrants for the corresponding period last year, but he omitted to state that the excess of emigrants from this country for the same period was 15,000.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: Would the hon. Member say where he got those figures?

*MR. EMMOTT: Certainly. From a signed article in the *Manchester Guardian.* I should perhaps have said I have not verified them.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: Signed by whom?

MR. EMMOTT: Signed by a gentleman named Lauda. I should have said I have not verified them, but Mr. Lauda wrote with such a grasp of his subject that I feel justified in quoting his figures. But the figures presented by the Board of Trade Returns are not alarming figures, the total increase during the last three years is very, very small. It is the smallest total of any progressive country in the world, and if we are going to carry out this Bill it may result in a serious loss of transport and a serious danger, too, in the upsetting of our shipping. If you carried out this Bill in its entirety how many people are you going to stop coming into this country? I do not believe you will stop 100; but be it 100 or be it 500, what effect can that have on the question of wages and sweating or overcrowding? With regard to the criminal and diseased foreigners we all agree that if we cannot stop them when they come in we should as soon as possible expel them when they are found out. The only argument we have heard to-night in favour of the Bill was that put forward by the hon. Member for Poplar, namely, that it was the best men who went away and the worst that remained with us. That is a question to which very serious attention, I think, should be given. We have heard of something of that kind with regard to miners in Scotland. On the other hand there is a good deal of evidence telling in another direction, because the reports of the Jewish schoolmasters show how well the children of these aliens are doing in the schools, and the returns of lunatics and paupers show that the aliens who come on the rates of this country are proportionately only one-third or one-fourth of the natives who come upon them. With regard to the question of sanitation and overcrowding, that can only be dealt with by general administration and the waking up of the local authorities.

The real crux of this question is whether poverty is a sufficient reason for keeping out these aliens. The poverty test is evaded in New York, and I believe it will be evaded in this country. This country has always made the proud claim in the past that it has been the asylum of political refugees and of the victims of religious persecution, and let hon. Members remember that if we have not in the past entertained angels unawares, we have given a home to those who have been pioneers in the arts of peace and who have taught us trades to the great advantage of ourselves. Hundreds of years ago the foundations of our textile trades were laid by aliens to whom we had given an asylum; aliens, again, have taught us much in artistic production. They soon became art of ourselves. If not *Anglioris Anglicis ipsis* they were as patriotic, as useful, and as intelligent members of society as the native born amongst us. At present, I know, we have a different class to deal with. There is an influx from Eastern Europe, if not for political reasons for religious reasons. It is not a large or dangerous influx, and these men become very soon peaceable and law-abiding citizens of this country. I ask the House is it worth while for an evil so small to introduce legislation of such a novel and startling character? I myself think not, and I hope my hon. friends on this side of the House will not be afraid to give utterance to their convictions on this subject or to back them up in the division lobbies. I know we shall be subjected to misrepresentations. I have in my hand a leaflet issued from the chief Conservative office and distributed broadcast at the time of the Stalybridge election, which, if I may, I will read part of to the House. It says—

> "'Let them all come' is the Radical cry. The Radicals, by their obstruction to the Aliens Bill, are evidently glad to see all foreigners who are criminals, who suffer from loathsome diseases, who are turned out in disgrace by their fellow-countrymen, who are paupers, who fill our streets with profligacy and disorder. The Radical welcomes them all."

I call that a lying and disgraceful leaflet, which no hon. Member who is an hon. Member can possibly support.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: What the hon. Member has stated accurately describes the attitude of the Radical Party in the election of 1892 and 1895.

*MR. EMMOTT: This has nothing to do with those elections. This has to do with the election at Stalybridge, and it is absolutely and entirely untrue; we are as anxious to exclude the criminals and those who have loathsome diseases as hon. Members opposite, and we will support that part of the Bill.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham): Is the hon. Member opposing the Bill at the present moment?

*MR. EMMOTT: I am going to support the Amendment of my right hon. friend the Member for the Forest of Dean. So far as we are concerned I am quite certain that we have no reasons whatever for not expressing our convictions on this matter, and, so far as I am concerned, I shall support the Amendment of my right hon. friend.

*SIR HOWARD VINCENT: As one who has taken interest in the matter for many years, and as one who sat on the Royal Commissions in 1888 and 1889, I desire to thank the Government for having introduced this Bill, and having shown a determination to pass it through this session by placing it so early before the House. That it is an excellent Bill we have the testimony of the hon. Member for Poplar and those who signed the representation which he sent to the Leader of the Opposition. He said it was capable of being made a useful and effective measure. The hon. Member for Poplar made an excellent speech this afternoon, and I only regret that last year he was not placed on the Grand Committee, because if he had been he might have put a stop to some of the obstructive procedure of his hon. friends.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said as a member of the Committee of Selection it was impossible for him to be a member of any Grand Committee.

*SIR HOWARD VINCENT: I am glad to have given the hon. Member an opportunity of making that explanation, because it has been a matter of surprise to many that the hon. Member was not a member of that Committee. The hon. Member who has just spoken did not give a particularly clear answer to the hon. Member for Peckham as to whether he was opposing this Bill now.

MR. EMMOTT: I object to exclusion on the score of poverty.

*SIR HOWARD VINCENT: Then I take it he is opposing the Bill. I have no responsibility for the leaflet the hon. Member read to the House, but if he had been present at the Grand Committee last year when the whole of six sittings were occupied in listening to interminable speeches of hon. Members opposite, with the result that, at the end of the time, only three lines and one word of the Bill had been passed, he would understand the reason why we are glad to see on the other side of the House so considerable a change in the views of those hon. Members. [Several HON. MEMBERS: It is a different Bill.] The Bill is practically the same, and it is due to the action of hon. Members opposite last year that the country has had to suffer from the continuance of this evil for another twelve months. The hon. Member, when dealing with the figures, took his figures from the tables of emigration to and from foreign countries, but we are dealing with alien immigration to this country from the Continent. The total number of persons entered in the alien list is 194,836, from which must be deducted the seamen. I cannot see why the seamen should be deducted myself, and I think if Mr. Havelock Wilson, who was in this House and who was closely connected with the Seamen's Union, were here now he would have taken great exception to the deduction of these seamen who affect so much the welfare of British seamen. But having made all deductions we have a remainder of 82,845 immigrants as against 61,968 in 1902, and 63,401 in 1903. In those three years the total number of immigrants came to 218,484, of which it appears from the Report 77 per cent. were Russian and Polish Jews who settled in London.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: "Arrived" not "settled."

*SIR HOWARD VINCENT: I am obliged to the hon. Gentleman. They arrived in London and went from there to Sheffield, Leeds, Birmingham, and other places, all those who did not settle in London. The hon. Member for Oldham quoted certain figures which he said he obtained from the *Manchester Guardian*.

MR. EMMOTT said the figures he quoted dealt with the balance of immigrants over emigrants in the first three months of this year.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I was not in the House when the hon. Gentleman quoted these figures, but I understand he stated that any fool could see the fallacy of the figures I gave. The figures I gave were from the monthly Return, and were precisely accurate, and they are borne out by the figures at the top of page 11 of the statement made by the Board of Trade.

MR. EMMOTT: Has the right hon. Gentleman read the first paragraph on page 10, and, if so, what does he think about it?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I dealt with that just now, that is not relevant to the Return we are dealing with.

*SIR HOWARD VINCENT: A number of hon. Members have represented that a large proportion of the alien immigrants who come into this country are on their way to the United States. But there is no really accurate information on the subject of this transmigration. This question is not one which affects London alone; there are various other centres where the effects of alien immigration are felt. The number of aliens in receipt of Poor Law relief last year was 6,003—4,000 in London, and the remainder in the provinces. That is a very considerable number for us to give entertainment to at the public expense. Then, again, no account has been taken of the considerable hardship to the population of this country caused by the immigration of these aliens. The people of this country have to work longer hours, and at lower rates in consequence, and in many places these aliens have driven the native population out of their occupations. It was clearly shown before the Select Committee that many of these aliens, although not themselves on the poor rate, have caused others to subsist upon Poor Law relief. The Jewish Board of Guardians has repeatedly called attention to the extraordinary increase in the number of poor they have had to deal with; that shows the character of this immigration. What is the use of the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean and other hon. Members opposite relying entirely upon these figures, because they are not at all reliable. I am not quite sure whether the hon. Member for Woolwich is in favour of this Bill, as I have not been able to gather whether he is or not from the interruptions he has made.

MR. CROOKS: Can a Member not give a cheer without being challenged as to what he is going to do?

*SIR HOWARD VINCENT: I do hope that we shall hear the views of some of the Labour Members opposite before this debate closes. I hope the hon. Member for Battersea, who is not present now, will give us his views upon this question. The absence of the Labour Members from this debate is very remarkable indeed. The increase in the number of criminal aliens is serious. In 1897 there were over 2,000 aliens, and last year there were 4,700 aliens who were convicted and received sentences of imprisonment and penal servitude. Frequent reference has been made to the United States. The object of their legislation is to compel the steamship lines to take every possible precaution against bringing any but the best immigrants into the country. In the last twelve years over 40,000 persons have been debarred from entering the United States. During one month in the year 1902, 1,000 emigrants to the United States were returned to the United Kingdom. A little while ago a large number of gipsies were taken over to America, but were refused admittance, and were brought back and landed in this country, where they were sent about from county to county—a most disgraceful state of things, though one cannot blame the local authorities for the action they took. Last year 1,721 aliens of the class who are supposed to go on to the United States were refused passages at Liverpool on account of disease, and upwards of 900 of these were sent to London to spread their maladies among the native population. The hon. and gallant Member for the Isle of Wight said it was the duty of a Christian country to offer hospitality to the afflicted, but surely it is the duty of a country to look after its own people first of all. Surely we ought to protect our own people from the unfair competition of foreigners, and from people coming in under unsatisfactory conditions. Above all, it is the duty of this House and the country to protect its own people from contamination, and from the loathsome diseases from which many of these aliens suffer. I thank the Government for having put this Bill down so early, for it is an earnest of their determination to pass it this session, and I hope the Under-Secretary will press upon the Prime Minister the great importance of putting down the Committee stage of this Bill as early as possible, and of pushing forward the Bill by every possible means.

*MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): I agree with the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite that the first duty of a Government is to its own people. If the Government had proceeded on those lines, the Unemployed Workmen Bill would have occupied the place which this fraudulent measure occupies at the present moment. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham has expressed concern as to the views of the working classes on this question. I can assure him there is no demand for this Bill from the working classes. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh!"] The records of the Trade Union Congress will be searched in vain for any sign of approval of a measure of this kind, and the congress, and not hon. Members opposite, is the mouth-piece of the trade union movement. The Bill is supported on one genuine and one fictitious basis. The genuine basis is that certain people who are diseased, or who are criminals, come into this country every year. Everybody admits that in that respect there may be a demand for legislation. But the Bill is spoken of in the House, in the Press, and on the platforms of hon. Gentlemen opposite, not as a Bill to keep out criminals and diseased aliens, but as one to keep out workmen who come here to compete with native labour. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Both."] In that sense it is fraudulent, deceitful, and dishonourable. The Labour Members, and working people generally, understand that there may come a time when the importation of aliens might become a serious question, requiring to be dealt with in a drastic fashion by the House, but we protest against a Bill of this kind being dangled before the eyes of the workers as a remedy for the competition in certain trades when we know it will not touch the fringe of the question.

I have listened with some interest to the speech of the hon. Member for Mile End, who talked of the numbers of aliens who required assistance from the Jewish Board of Guardians and the other Committees for the relief of Jews in London. One would have thought to listen to the hon. Gentleman that this Bill is establishing a charity organisation for Jewish poor, and is not an attempt to keep out the poor altogether. Some figures have been quoted in regard to criminal aliens, but there is nothing whatever to show that the criminals are drawn from the poor of London, or that they were criminals before coming to this country. The most probable explanation is that the measure of prosperity which they enjoy here has produced a degree of criminality to which they were strangers at home. [MINISTERIAL laughter.] Let me remind hon. Members who laugh that if this argument of the increase of crime is brought forward as a reason for expelling Jews, it can equally be applied to Scotland, because some years ago crime in that country developed enormously, and that was due to good wages and the amount of money which the people were able to spend upon liquor. That probably explains the case of the pauper alien. Under the first clause of this Bill poverty is put forward as the crime for which the alien is to be kept out of this country, and Sub-section A provides as follows—

> "For the purpose of this section an immigrant shall be considered an undesirable immigrant if he cannot show that he has in his possession, or is in a position to obtain, the means of decently supporting himself and his dependents, if any."

And so those poor creatures who have been shot down in the streets of Warsaw and other parts of Russia, those poor poverty-stricken human beings who have been hunted down as beasts of prey, are to be condemned by this Bill to remain in a country that does not know how to treat them. The hon. Member for Mile End referred to the question of Chinese immigration, but I wish to point out to him that Clause 1. seems as if it were framed to legalise immigration under contracts. A person coming in has to prove that he can support himself, but if he has a contract with an employer to take the place of a British working man on strike he is allowed the right of free entry. Therefore, this clause, whilst designed against poverty, may also be used in future to the very serious detriment of the working classes of this country. Reference has been made to America keeping out these poor people. In America they commenced by making poverty a crime; they have advanced a stage further now and made opinions a crime. A gentleman belonging to this city went out to America on a lecturing engagement last year, and he was kept in prison for ten weeks, not because he was poor, but because he held certain political opinions. We on these benches refuse to take the first step along the road which leads to the destruction of the liberty of the subject and of freedom of opinion.

What is this terrible burden that is being imposed on us by these aliens? The hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite spoke of Sheffield. I have taken the trouble to turn up the figures relating to Sheffield as given in the Board of Trade Return. I find that the number of alien paupers in Sheffield in 1902 was twenty-one, and in 1904 they had increased to twenty-four. This increase of one pauper a year is what justifies that wealthy city in supporting a Bill of this kind. Birmingham is in even a worse plight. In 1902 the number of pauper aliens was 121 and last year they had decreased to eighty-nine. Obviously, therefore, there is no increase in Birmingham to justify this measure. When we come there to Liverpool we get the same results. In 1902 the number of pauper aliens chargeable to the rates was 372, and in 1904 they had fallen to 310. [AN HON. MEMBER: These figures are wrong.] I am taking the figures as they are given in this Emigration and Immigration Return. I cannot be expected to go beyond the official Return. The figures are correct so far as they go. I hope the hon. Gentleman does not charge the Board of Trade with falsifying this Return. That is practically what his statement amounts to. I admit that in parts of London there has been an increase. In

Poplar, according to the same authority, they increased from fifty-three to seventy-four; but in St. Pancras they decreased from 133 to 130. The total number for London has gone up from 3,234 to 4,162, but I may remind the House that the increase is not confined to pauper aliens. There has been an increase all round in the number of paupers in London and elsewhere, not due to the foreigner, but due to the depressed state of our trade, which to a large extent is the outcome of the war which was supported on the other side of the House. In regard to London pauperism generally, I will only make one [extract from] the half-yearly statement which appears on page 9 of the Report. It is dated 1st July, 1904. The total number of paupers was higher in London at that date than at the corresponding date in any of the twenty-two previous years, there being a rise of 4·1 per cent. Therefore, the increase in the pauper aliens is little more than keeping pace with the increase in the native pauperism. We all regret the increase in pauperism and the causes of pauperism. If the working class received more of the wealth which their labour produces there would be fewer paupers. Quoting again from the same Return, may I point out in regard to the increase in paupers generally, that between the years 1896 and 1904 the increase in the cost in London was ·05 per cent., and for the country as a whole 2·9 per cent. Here is an interesting point which the hon. Member for Northampton may be able to explain. The increased cost of pauperism in Northampton was 9·1 per cent. There are no pauper aliens in Northampton. Here we have it shown that in districts totally free from this alleged evil the increase of pauperism has been greater than in the worst parts of London. Now we come to the charity of which the hon. Gentleman opposite made so much in the course of his speech. The Jewish Board of Guardians relieved in 1894, 20,434 Jewish aliens. In 1904, the number had increased to 22,859. This is the intolerable burden which is being imposed by poor Jews in London upon their richer fellow-subjects, and which is made a ground for and justification of this Bill.

Now I come to the second part of Clause 1 dealing with the exclusion of men and women who are accused of being criminals. I frankly admit that this a more serious part of the clause. It is an easy thing in Russia or Germany to prove a Socialist to be a criminal, and the people most in need of protection are those most likely to be affected by this Bill should it become law. I would ask the House to note that an immigrant has to prove that he is seeking admission to this country solely to avoid prosecution for an offence of a political character. He has to prove his innocence to a shipmaster, and seeing that that shipmaster, if he makes a mistake, will have to take him back at his own charge, it is easy to understand how difficult it will be for a man suspected by the authorities to prove his innocence to a shipmaster. Taking the immigrants for last year, you will find the overwhelming proportion of the increase is in the refugees from Russia and Poland. It is certain that the bulk of those people will be poor people who will be kept out under this Bill, and are we to say to those poor creatures that England of all lands under the sun is no resting place for them from the conditions now prevailing in their own country? I hope the House will hesitate before closing the one way of escape which these poor victims of injustice have left open to them. I deplore that some of the Opposition leaders have withdrawn their opposition to the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham rightly taunted his opponents with the fact that in agreeing to the measure they were taking the first step towards protection, and I agree with him. Whatever the front Opposition Bench might do the Labour Members will give a solid and unyielding opposition to the Bill unless the parts of it which I have specified are withdrawn.

*MR. FORDE RIDLEY (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I have listened to the speeches which have been made on both sides of the House, and I believe hon. Members will agree with me when I say that we have had a most remarkable debate. All the speeches to which I have listened from hon. Members opposite, whether they have been made with the intention of supporting or opposing the Bill have, I think I may say, with the exception of the last speech from the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil, made out a striking case for the Bill now before the House. The speech of the right hon. Baronet who moved the Amendment resolved itself into this. He relied on statistics to show that the number of aliens who came into this country was so infinitesimal that the effect of the Bill would be nil. If that be the case, then why the violent opposition to the measure? If the result is to be, as he has endeavoured to show, no effect whatever, then for my part I cannot understand this keen and active hostility to the measure which he has shown. The hon. Member for the Elland Division seconded the Amendment, and, after all, what does his speech amount to? Very much the same thing. The hon. Member said that there was no material difference between this Bill and that of last year. Very well, if there is no material difference, why this change of front on the part of Members on the benches opposite? Last year they gave no quarter to those who supported the Bill. They were opposed to the Bill root and branch, and now hon. Members get up in their places and say that there is nothing obnoxious in the Bill, and that, after all, there is nothing in it, and that it is so trifling a matter that it is not worth fighting about. The hon. Member for the Elland Division also said that the reason for taking this particular view of the Bill was the near approach of a general election. There I am entirely in accordance with him. I think the view that hon. Members opposite have taken now of the Aliens Bill, which on the hon. Member's own showing is virtually the same as that of last year, is the very near approach, as they think, of a general election. The hon. Member for the Elland Division proceeded to set up a bogey, and then, as we say, to knock the stuffing out of it. He said that Members on this side of the House are of opinion that an increase in population means an increase in the number of unemployed. The only persons who adduce such a theory are the Gentlemen who used that argument in their opposition to the introduction of alien labour into South Africa. They opposed the introduction of Chinese labour into a market which was in need of unskilled labour, yet we find them in favour of the introduction of alien labour into a market which is admittedly overstocked, and holding up their hands in pious horror at the proposal to prevent the introduction of alien labour into our overcrowded districts.

The hon. Member for the Cleveland Division of Yorkshire made out, I think, a strong case from his point of view. He said that pauperism in this country was a very serious matter, and that he would welcome any measure that would deal with it. He omitted to mention that the statistics of pauperism which have been quoted so freely in this House to-night by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite take no cognisance of the great relief that is given by the Jewish Board of Guardians to the members of their own community in regard to this matter. That being so, I think we arrive at very erroneous conclusions in regard to numbers, because it is an undoubted fact and well known that the Jewish Board of Guardians are very lavish in the assistance they give to their co-religionists, not only in sheltering them when they arrive in a friendless and destitute condition in this country, but also in assisting them to return if, after making a stay of a month or two months, or, it may be, a year, or longer, it is found that they are not likely to succeed in this country. They expend large sums in sending them back to the countries from which they came. It is all very well to say that we deplore pauperism, but it would be simpler if, instead of having all the relief machinery which is now in operation, we went to the root of the matter and stopped the cause of pauperism, which undoubtedly is partly due to the admission of huge numbers of aliens who undersell our own working class in the labour market. I know this from personal experience, and I have some experience of the workers in the East End of London, not only in my own constituency, but in other parts. I know that there are no workers in the East End of London who will welcome this measure for alien restriction more than the members of the Jewish community who have settled in this country and who now earn a good living.

The hon. Member for the Cleveland Division referred to the criminals. He said he deplored the great number of criminals in this country, and he pointed out how great the proportion was. It amounted to fifteen in every 1,000 of the alien community. Again I would say, why not apply the axe to the root of the tree, for the proportion of criminals is very great as compared with the native population? Why not stop off the supply at the source and not admit those criminals who come into this country, because the hon. Member for the Cleveland Division cannot surely assume that it is the evil influence of this country which makes these aliens criminals? No, they come with the intention of perpetrating their nefarious plans when they arrive on our shores. When the criminal statistics are of such a serious nature I think they ought to be taken into consideration when dealing with this question. In answer to a Question which I put the other day in regard to these criminal statistics, the Secretary of State for the Home Department stated that a special inquiry had been made and had elicited the information that in 1904 no less than 4,833 alien criminals were received into His Majesty's prisons of Great Britain and Ireland. These criminals had been kept at the expense of this country. Hon. Members will agree with me that this is a serious number indeed. In reply to a supplementary Question put by the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil, it was stated that between 1896 and 1904 the ordinary prisoners in His Majesty's prisons had increased by 22 per cent., whereas, during the same period, alien prisoners had increased by 68 per cent. As hon. Members must know, that means an enormons cost to the taxpayers of this country.

In regard to the speech of the hon. Member for Cleveland, I have only one thing to say on a matter in which I cannot entirely agree with him. He said, referring to the Jewish community, that the Jews easily assimilate with the nations in which they go to dwell. There, I think, the facts will not bear out the statement. I think it will be universally admitted, not only by the members of the Gentile persuasion, but by the members of the Jewish persuasion, that the Jews do not assimilate easily with those of the Gentile persuasion. In whatever country they go to they intermarry among their own people, and they do not easily assimilate with the Gentile population. I think this is one of the causes which leads to the great congestion in the overcrowded districts. It is not practicable to introduce a measure to spread these people all over the country.

In regard to the remarks of the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight, who said that America had only prevented a comparatively small number of immigrants in a year from gaining admission to her shores, I would point out to him that his argument does not show that the American law is ineffective. It has a deterrent effect. The restrictive legislation there prevents these people from going to America to reside, because they know perfectly well that if they go to the expense of taking a passage to America, they stand a chance, on arriving at the ports of debarkation, of being sent back—I was going to say to the country from which they came — at any rate, to this country. Therefore, the legislation in America has a deterrent effect on the stream of immigration to that country. Instead of his argument being against this measure, it is in favour of our adopting similar legislation, which results in thousands of people being sent back; and a similiar measure in this country would have a similar healthy effect.

I do not propose to detain the House at any length to-night. The question has been discussed on two former occasions during the time the present Government has been in power, and all we can say in regard to the figures which have been produced from time to time in the House is that, instead of this being a mere passing evil, as hon. Members opposite have tried to impress on the House, the evil has been increasing and the number of these foreign paupers and undesirable aliens coming to our shores is still increasing. Hon. Members opposite are always willing to give reasons for this. At one time they say that it is because of wars; at another time they allege that it is an Anti-Semitic movement. But whatever the cause, we do not concern ourselves with it. What we have got to look at is that there is a growing increase in the number of undesirable aliens flocking to our shores, which are already overcrowded, who are underselling our workpeople, turning them out of their homes, and making their lives unendurable. In my own constituency whole streets of new houses are continually being erected — properties are being pulled down and large dwellings are being put up for the occupation of which, it is announced, "No Gentiles need apply." Why is it that these new streets are being built to accommodate a larger number of persons if the numbers are falling off, and why is it that no individuals are to be received as tenants but those who come from every country but our own?

Now, in regard to the question of the desirability of the immigrants who come to our shores, I know that it has been said, not once nor twice in this House and outside, that these immigrants bring to this country new industries which they alone can excel in, and which the British working man can never make a success of. I will read a short extract from a paper read by the sanitary inspector in the employment of the Bethnal Green Borough Council before the Sanitary Inspectors' Association last year to show the sort of industries which are introduced by these aliens into the crowded districts of our cities. He said—

> "I will just mention two cases that occurred in Bethnal Green. Our medical officer of health and I, on a Wednesday afternoon, paid a visit to an underground bakehouse. The place was in a filthy state. I turned out seven cats and four kittens from under the trough, as well as some dirty socks that smelt rather queerly. The floor was as black as coal; the baker, a Russian Jew, who gave an English name, was dressed in a woman's petticoat tied at the waist, and was kneading the dough on the black floor with his naked feet. The dough was adhering to his toes, and whilst we were there he scraped his toes with his filthy hands and mixed it with the other dough. The other case was in an underground bakehouse kept by a Polish Jew; this man had let off one end of his bakehouse to a family as a room to live and sleep in. They had rigged up a curtain and were sleeping upon the miller's sacks; when I examined them they were almost alive with vermin. The bakehouse, in addition, was very filthy."

Are these the industries introduced by aliens which it is desirable that we should foster and encourage? These aliens come and compete with the British working man and would drag him down to their own degraded level. I refer to the hon. Member opposite who is here in the labour interest. All honour to him. He alone has the courage to come here and express his opinions in this House against this Bill; but I do not believe that hon. Members who voice the sentiments of the working classes will rise in their places and say that they are of opinion that the working classes of this country should be degraded to the standard of these aliens. I do not impute any evil motives to these poor creatures; but surely it is for us first of all to defend our own working classes and their wives and families from the degradation in which these aliens are sunk, and not to drive them down to the alien level. There is another case I wish to mention. It refers to the ready-made tailoring trade, which is supposed to have been brought to this country by these aliens, and in which it is said our working classes cannot compete with them. A witness stated last year that—

> "Another and important section of the tailoring trade is being organised—namely, the machine button-hole makers. A public meeting of these men was held 'to consider how to make a standard of livelihood, as the wages are so low that no one can make a living at it.' These button-hole makers possess their own machines, take the finished garment from the middleman to their own back rooms and undergound cellars, and make one hundred button-holes for 1s., and provide their own gimp and twist."

I say that that is a scandal and disgrace to this country; and that those hon. Members who have the courage to go into the lobby to oppose this Bill will stand condemned before the working-men of this country; and though they say there is no demand for legislation of this kind, they will find when they ask for the suffrages of their working-men supporters that they will get an answer very different from that which they have prophesied in this House.

I add my meed of praise to the Government on at last having taken up this question seriously, and on having determined at all costs to see this Bill to a successful issue. We have waited long for remedial legislation. It has been promised over and over again; and if it had not been for the dilatory tactics of the Opposition, led by the hon. Member for Oldham, during last session, that legislation would have passed last year and we should not have had the bitter cry from East London of unemployment in the bygone winter. For we should have succeeded in keeping out a very large number indeed of aliens who have been coming in increasing numbers to our shores to under-sell our working men in the labour market and do such damage by turning them out of their homes and taking away their means of livelihood. Hon. Members opposite affect to believe that this Bill is a great improvement on the Bill of last year, and many of them are not going to oppose it; but I am not a great believer in deathbed repentances. I know that the general election is not far distant, and I reserve to myself the right to see the further stages of this Bill passed, and how hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite intend to behave in regard to this measure, before I accept the assurances so kindly and blandly given by them.

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.): The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has painted in very lurid colours the condition of certain labourers in this Metropolis. I think he might have found in some other departments of industry in the country—for example, the chain-makers of Staffordshire—instances of conditions of labour which would excite the sympathy of the House and provoke the same horrifying sensations which he has sought to impart to us over alien labour in the East End of London. I am disposed to think that my hon. friend who sits behind me is a more efficient representative of the working classes of this country than the hon. Gentleman. I will go further and say that, in the speech he has made to-night, he has represented the characteristic generosity of the working classes of this country towards aliens. This movement in favour of the Bill does not emanate from the working classes, but from those who think they can appeal to the prejudice, ignorance, and bigotry of certain sections of the community who came closely in contact with aliens. We are indebted to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham] for his really clear explanation of the object of the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman, with his customary frankness, told the House that this is a protective measure, intended as part of the policy which he hopes to apply to the importation of articles. That is a perfectly fair position for the right hon. Gentleman to take up; but if the right hon. Gentleman had gone a step further and had demonstrated to us that this influx of aliens did seriously interfere with the British working classes I should have voted with instead of against him. But the right hon. Gentleman—I say it with all respect—although he made a proposition which, if proved, might have commended itself to the House, failed to give any proof of it. Perhaps we shall hear from the First Lord of the Treasury some little addition to what has fallen from his colleagues—some evidence that there is competition by foreign alien workmen with our own workmen. Our only sources of information on that point are to be found from those people who have studied the question and from the Report of the Royal Commission. Now, the Report of the Royal Commission establishes beyond controversy—I do not mean to say that there are not individual cases in a contrary sense—that the great bulk of the aliens who come to this country are engaged in trades which have not hitherto been followed by native industrials. [MINISTERIAL cries of "What trades?"] The trades are stated in the Report of the Royal Commission. There is, for instance, the cabinet-making trade. [MINISTERIAL ironical laughter.] Hon. Members laughed. Do they not known that the cabinet-making trade is a very large industry and that it is followed by Jew aliens. Do they not know that they have a trade union of their own?

MR. MARKS (Kent, Thanet): What does the hon. Member mean by Jew aliens?

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES: The hon. Member ought to know that better than I do. I understand that the great bulk of the Jew aliens are of the same religious persuasion as himself.

Sir H. DAVIES (Chatham): Are there aliens in the Durham mines?

Mr. ATHERLEY-JONES: In answer to that staccato interruption, I do not know that there are any aliens in the Durham mines, but I believe there are some in the mines of Lanarkshire. I say that these Jew alien carpenters constitute a large industry and that they have recently entered into negotiations with their English fellow-workers to assimilate their conditions of labour with the same efficient conditions as the Englishmen. Then there is the apparel trade, which is largly carried on by foreigners. It is a trade which did not flourish in this country through native industry; but it has progressed since the introduction of it by foreigners, and has been a source of strength and advantage to this country. Then there is the boot-making trade. [Ironical Ministerial laughter.] Yes: there is a certain class of the boot-making trade which was not pursued by English mechanics, but which has been largely developed here by foreigners. In 1888 we exported from this country what is called ready-made clothing to the value of £4,600,000, while in 1902 that trade had increased to six millions odd; and we are told on indisputable authority that that is the result of Jew aliens immigrant labour. In 1888 we exported 660,000 dozen pairs of shoes; in 1902 that had increased to 1,800,000, and we are told on high authority that that is due to alien industry. With all these facts before us, I press on hon. Gentlemen opposite that there is no evidence to show that the alien immigrant has entered into serious competition with the British working man. The only possible instance is to be found in the coal mines of Lanarkshire, but, so far as I can learn, it has resulted in no serious displacement of Scottish labour. So much for competition with English labour.

What is the pretext for this Bill? It is that disease, crime, and pauperism are introduced here by aliens. In regard to disease, there again the only trustworthy testimony is that of the officials and the medical officers of health. The Medical Officer of Health for London has demonstrated that the standard of health among the foreign labourers is higher than amongst our own working classes. We are told that 24,000 people passed through the Jewish Shelter, and that there was only one case of infectious disease amongst them. Take the statistics from your hospitals. The evidence is that the Jew is a healthier subject—for the foreigner is a Jew for the most part—than the English. Their children are strong, lusty, vigorous. The parents are scrupulous in their care of and tenderness for their children. There is no pretence for saying that the Jew immigrants are unhealthy. Of course nobody would object to inspection; but the number who would be excluded from this country in that way would be infinitesimal. Well, there remains pauperism. The hon. Member for Mile End told us that a substantial part of that belonged to the Jewish race. I was sorry to hear him say that the burden of the poor Jews was so heavy on the rich, wealthy Jews.

Mr. H. LAWSON: I did not say that the Jewish immigrants were a burden on the wealthy Jews in this country. I said that in the ordinary course of things the steady in-rush of the last few years had caused, according to the testimony of the Jewish Board of Guardians, a very severe and unnecessary call upon their resources.

Mr. ATHERLEY-JONES: I think their resources are equal to it. I do not think the hon. Member represents the sentiment of a race, who are singularly generous to their compatriots. I do not think that that should be a reason for supporting this Bill. At any rate, the House is not concerned with any little amercements that may be made upon his class for these people.

Mr. H. LAWSON: I never claimed to speak on behalf of any class. I simply stated the facts as they appear in the report of the Jewish Board of Guardians.

Mr. ATHERLEY-JONES: I think it would have been better if the hon. Member had allowed one of the race for whom he speaks to have made the statement. It takes away what little value would otherwise have attached to what the hon. Gentleman said. Then what are the statistics of pauperism? They have been given us by various public officers.

Taking the Jew areas of Bethnal Green, Shoreditch, and Stepney, there are 715,000 inhabitants, of which 62,000 are male aliens. Out of these 715,000 there are 10,800 indoor paupers and of these 109 are aliens. Is it not ludicrous to talk about the pauperism of the alien immigrants and their being a burden on the rates? The same thing applies to outdoor relief and to other parts of the country. The alien is a hard-working, industrious person. Then as to crime. It is undoubtedly a fact that there is a considerable amount of crime—so we are told—among aliens. But who are the aliens who commit the crime? Not the aliens you would exclude by this Bill, but people who come from America. The proportion of American aliens who commit crime is something like 23 or 24 per cent., while the proportion of the criminals who come from Russia and Poland is an infinitesimal fraction of that number.

I am opposing this Bill on higher grounds. I am voting against it for reasons which ought to appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. I see in it means by which political refugees may be excluded from these shores. The Bill provides, apparently, that no criminal shall be admitted into this country. But how is the alien who comes to these shores to satisfy the Inspecting Board or the inspecting officer that he is not a criminal? I suppose he will have to bring some document to show that he is not a criminal. But where is he to get it from? He must get it from the police authorities of the country which he leaves. No doubt the Russian police would be only too glad to give a clean bill to any scoundrel who wished to leave that country. But how about the political offender? How can he get to these shores and be allowed to land if he cannot produce a document to show that he is not a criminal? I appeal to all who are anxious to preserve the right of asylum, and to all who are devoted to that great traditional policy of this country, to vote against a measure which renders it possible that mere officialism shall be able to exclude the political refugee from this country. I do not fear for the English interests even if the number of aliens were to be doubled, because I believe that the people here are strong enough, both intellectually and numerically, to absorb a larger number of alien people. The proportion of aliens in this country is only ·69 per cent. against 2·0 per cent. in any other country, and against 13·0 per cent. in America. I have inherited traditions which compel me to vote against a measure which I think would tend to impair the world-wide and historical reputation which this country has enjoyed for centuries as being a sanctuary of the politically distressed. At the present moment things are being done in Russia which compel people to fly from that country, and as to the character of which there is no difference of opinion on either side of this House. It would be a cruel thing, an un-Christian thing, and an anti-national thing for us to take this opportunity of putting any hindrance in the way of those unhappy creatures being afforded that asylum which for long centuries it has been the pride of this country to extend.

The PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): A speaker earlier in debate—I think it was the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Elland Division—told the House that we, sitting on this side of it, were the only Party who had ever passed a Bill of this kind, and no doubt he spoke the truth. But I think hon. Gentlemen opposite have begun to realise that the political forces, at all events, and, as I would venture to hope, the argumentative forces also, in favour of the Bill, are rather stronger than perhaps they were disposed to think when they offered an uncompromising opposition to every stage of the measure which they had an opportunity of dealing with last year. I do not think anybody who has followed the general course of the debate to-night can really think that the arguments put forward—some of them arguments dealing, no doubt, with feelings with which we all sympathise—can be considered by those who approach this subject in a cool spirit as showing the slightest cause why the House should not carry into law a Bill approved on the Second Reading last year, and which, I understand, is to be approved again, perhaps even without a division.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the Bill will be approved by a large majority when those who have announced their intention of dividing against it have had the opportunity of showing their numerical strength. I have regretted that at intervals throughout the debate there have appeared some allusions to what on the Continent has attained unenviable fame as the Jewish question. The Bill which we are discussing to-night has nothing whatever to do with what in Continental Europe, and especially in Eastern Europe, is called the Jewish question. I cannot imagine anything more disastrous than that any legislation by this House or speech in the House should attempt to join a measure which I shall presently attempt to show is consistent with every sound system of statesmanship with the bigotry, the oppression, the hatred the Jewish race has too often met with in foreign countries. The treatment of the race has been a disgrace to Christendom, a disgrace which tarnishes the fair fame of Christianity even at this moment, and which in the Middle Ages gave rise to horrors which whoever makes himself acquainted with them, even in the most superficial manner, reads of with shuddering and feelings of horror lest any trace of the blood-guiltiness then incurred should have fallen on the descendants of those who committed the deeds. This is a question wholly alien to and wholly distinct from the Jewish question; and it has to do with a much wider problem, and on bold lines, with which I have no hesitation in expressing my belief—the problem whether an individual country has or has not the right to decide who is to be added to its community from outside, and under what conditions. That, I think, is a final and indestructible right of every free community; and we are amply justified by every principle of law and every principle of morality in determining for ourselves under what conditions we shall or shall not admit citizens of other nations to take a share in our civilisation, our industries, and in our social life.

Now the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean laid down the proposition that in considering the problem we need scarcely ever consider the question of race, but only questions of character, of spirit, of power of absorbing ideas and of sharing the sentiments of the nation into whose bosom the immigrants desire to come. There is great truth in what he said, but I think he pushed the proposition a little too far. I quite agree with him that the power America has shown of assimilating men of many distinct nationalities and many races and of turning them all by a process of natural alchemy into citizens of the United States, and who as such become heirs and sharers in Anglo-Saxon laws and civilisation—that power is marvellous. I do not wish to underrate it. But it has its limits, and none of us can, on calm reflection, seriously say we can ignore the question. If there were a substitution of Poles for Britons, for example, though the Briton of the future might have the same laws, the same institutions and constitution, and the same historical traditions learned in the elementary schools, though all these things might be in the possession of the new nationality, that new nationality would not be the same, and would not be the nationality we should desire to be our heirs through the ages yet to come.

There is assent on both sides of the House to the proposition that we have a moral right to decide whom we shall admit to our fold and under what conditions; and I ask—does the Bill lay down any extravagant or excessive requirements from those who desire to become British citizens or to come among us? Let the House notice there are two modern circumstances that seem to call for modern legislation, new conditions that call for new remedies, and the first of these is the facility of transport. It was perfectly easy and natural that our ancestors should not make any special provision against the immigration of aliens when immigration was not very easy for anybody, and was impossible for those who were both remote and poor. But the remote and poor can, under the modern condition of transport, come here with little or no difficulty; and, indeed, if some of the observations that I have heard in the course of the debate to-night are accurate, we have steamship companies and railway companies competing for their custom. Those are new conditions. Is it unnatural to suppose that to deal with those new conditions new provisions are required?

Then there is another circumstance, also new, also having its inevitable effect upon the course of legislation in this country; and that is that foreign countries, notably America and our own Colonies, have awoke to the fact to which we are slowly awakening—namely, that unrestricted immigration may become a great national evil. Now note how foreign legislation, especially American legislation, reacts upon us. It reacts upon us in this way, that those who come to this country on the way, as it were, to America, North or South, not with through tickets, but intending to spend a certain amount of time here, either from choice or necessity start from our shores to those countries, and when they get there only the fit are received, while the unfit are rejected and are sent back, where?—to this country. We become a sieve, as it were, which lets through the fit to North and South America, but which retains the unfit in the process. I was very much struck by a personal anecdote which the right hon. Member for East Fife told the House in the course of his speech this afternoon. He said that he had been to study the operations of the Jewish Shelter Society, a society which, with the splendid generosity of the Jewish community in this country, has set itself to work to deal with immigrants, not always Jews, but immigrants who have come in a state of extreme destitution and poverty to our shores. What did the right hon. Gentleman tell us? He told us that these people were on their way in many cases to other countries, and he especially mentioned Argentina. He was told that they stayed here one or two months, and gradually, by ones and twos or in larger numbers, the charity of the great Jewish community here enabled them to go to Argentina or North America. But who is it of these unfortunate people who do not go to Argentina? Is it the fit, is it the healthy, is it those whom we should most desire to retain here if we have to receive immigrants as citizens of our country? No, Sir, those are they who go; but those who stay are those who would not be accepted either in America or Argentina, and would not be accepted by the Jewish community and by the Jewish emigration societies themselves if the statements are true, as I am sure they are true, made by many speakers this afternoon, to the effect that these great Jewish emigration societies have most wisely and properly laid down the rule that only people such as those whom this Bill admits to this country shall be of the class allowed to go to their great settlements in Argentina. Is not that a conclusive proof that unless we do something we must remain the sieve in which the useless dregs remain?

Mr. ASQUITH: I must correct the right hon. Gentleman. So far as I can gather, those who remain here are persons fitted for occupations which are ready for them in this country.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Then we come to a very plain and simple issue. Either this Jewish Shelter Society never shelter, the diseased or those who are undesirable, or it emigrates the undesirable, or it leaves the undesirable in this country. Now, which of the three does the right hon. Gentlemen select? If the Shelter Society never deals with the undesirable, well, its charity is so far restricted and apparently it does not touch those who most need it. If, on the other hand, it emigrates the undesirable where does it emigrate them too? What country is going to take them? Is it Argentina, or America, or Canada?

An HON. MEMBER: None.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Of course not, they stay here; and, as I said, we are the sieve through which the good immigrant goes while the bad immigrant stays.

That is why I said this is one of the new conditions which did not exist some years ago, and which require the House to take account of the character of the immigrant who comes to our shores. That seems a conclusive argument in favour of doing something, and why is it that it does not meet with the universal assent of hon. Gentlemen opposite? The best reason I have heard is that which declares that it interferes for the first time in our national history with the right of asylum. I deny absolutely that it interferes with the right of asylum as it was understood by our forefathers. What was understood by the right of asylum in old days was this. We supposed ourselves, and with considerable reason, to be the best governed country in Europe. We were aware that there were a great many countries in Europe where tyranny prevailed and where it produced, as a natural consequence, conspiracies and in many cases armed rebellion; and we prided ourselves upon giving an asylum to the protagonists in a cause which we regarded as, with some exceptions, the cause of freedom. In so far as that doctrine is still maintained, it is not violated by this Bill.

CAPTAIN ELLICE (St. Andrews Burghs): Were the destitute included?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, the Bill specially provides that in explicit and clear terms. The point is that the destitution of the class of which I am speaking would not keep them out. But I observe that the right of asylum has received most amazing extensions in the hands of some speakers to-night. There is, indeed, one extension with which, as stated and on the first blush, we should all naturally sympathise. One hon. Gentleman talked about asylum for those driven out of their country by or on account of religion; for those who were persecuted at home for religious reasons, and who sought refuge here. I imagine there is not a man in the House who would not have the deepest sympathy for anybody of whom that could be truly said. But, surely, we must be careful of putting a provision in the Bill dealing with that. For instance, would you permit unlimited immigration of Roman Catholic Poles because the Roman Catholic religion is discouraged by measures we should disapprove of in Polish Russia? I can hardly believe that you would regard wholesale immigration on that ground as a thing to be tolerated in the highest interests of this country. But it is not to religion only that the right of asylum is now extended. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Elland in his speech said that we should give a right of asylum to every Reservist who disliked to join his colours. He put that forward with regard to Russia, because he disapproves of the Manchurian War. But are we to judge whether a war in a foreign country is just or unjust, and if, in our opinion, it is unjust, are we to admit Reservists? The hon. Gentleman said there is a class of Reservist who does not get a proper pension at the end of a war. Surely, he said, you are not going to keep him out. Are we going to consider in this country the terms on which Reservists are engaged in a foreign country, and, if we think them inadequate, are we to admit them in unlimited numbers, whether they be diseased or insane or not, simply because they happen to come under this extraordinarily extended doctrine which the hon, Gentleman has announced as that which, in his view, constitutes a right of asylum ?

I think that that really does not exhaust the fallacy into which the hon. Gentleman fell. I think he compressed into his speech almost all the bad arguments which I have heard in relation to this question. He does not seem to see that this Bill only excludes, broadly speaking, those who are likely to become a public charge. Why should we admit into this country people likely to become a public charge ? Many countries which exclude immigrants have no Poor Laws; they have not those great charities of which we justly boast. The immigrant comes in at his own peril and perishes if he cannot find a living. That is not the case here. From the famous statute of Elizabeth we have taken on ourselves the obligation of supporting every man, woman, and child in this country and saving them from starvation. Is the statute of Elizabeth to have European extension ? Are we to be bound to support every man, woman, and child incapable of supporting themselves who choose to come to our shores ? That argument seems to me to be preposterous. When it is remembered that some of these persons are a most undesirable element in the population, and are not likely to produce the healthy children of which the last speaker has spoken, but are afflicted with disease either of mind or of body, which makes them intrinsically undesirable citizens, surely the fact that they are likely to become a public charge is a double reason for keeping them out of the country. What is the answer to that argument ? There is absolutely no answer given except that the number of these people is so small relatively to the whole population of the country that they may be ignored.

Then we come to the figures produced by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Forest of Dean, and upon which other speakers have dwelt, I think, with very little profit. I would base my support of this Bill upon grounds much broader than those of the figures of immigration for this year or that year. What the right hon. Baronet contended for was that the number of immigrants is small. Take his own case on his own terms. Take the case of the hon. Member for the Elland Division, that the number is decimal half per cent. of the whole population, that the number of aliens actually in our workhouses or asylums is insignificant, and that it is impossible to conceive that such a small influx of foreigners can produce overcrowding. Is not that the greatest fallacy of all ? If they were spread over the whole community, if every workhouse and every asylum had its share and not more than its share of these people, if every hospital throughout the country was burdened exactly in proportion to its means by the sick who come from abroad, there would be some *prima facie* grounds, at all events, for the argument that this Bill, however just it might be, was hardly worth passing because the amount of hardship with which it dealt was so small. But what are the facts ? Every human being knows that the burden is thrown upon a relatively small part of the country. The hon. Member for the Elland Division comes forward and says the number of these poor people who come from foreign misgovernment and oppression is so small a fraction of your population, how can you be so hard as to exclude them ? Do his constituents pay for these people ? Do they go to the workhouses of the Elland Division ? I think he would be a consistent philanthropist, a true prophet, at all events, of the rights of asylum, if he and his friends bore a small share of the burden which is thrown upon the East End of London. If this right of asylum is a national duty, it ought to be a national charge, and the hon. Gentleman and his friends should bear their fair share of the charge. What actually happens is that these foreign immigrants go into a small area of the East End of London, and they produce the evil of overcrowding, of which I believe the accounts given, like that by my hon. friend who spoke last but one, are not the least exaggerated. How is that to be cured? It is to be cured, says the right hon. Baronet the Member for Forest of Dean, by enforcing your municipal laws and, if need be, by improving them; by making better and more stringent laws and, when you have made them, enforcing them. Let me translate that into the actual facts of Whitechapel. It means that the foreign immigrant first drives the British workman out of Whitechapel and then the small remnant has to pay the rates in order to carry out the sanitary arrangements and the Poor Law arrangements which are to remedy the state of things of which he is the victim. How can you justify it? The truth is that the evil is not only great and pressing in these districts where it prevails, but it is one which these districts are perfectly incapable of dealing with unassisted. I listened really with some shame to the loud professions of philanthropic altruism on the part of Gentlemen who pay neither from their own pockets nor from the pockets of their constituents, nor from any section or class with which they have to deal. They look on and see all these things happening, and simply occupy themselves in resisting a measure by which, to some extent at all events, I hope this evil will be remedied.

AN HON. MEMBER: Aliens pay rates.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Do the people whom this Bill would exclude contribute any important fraction to the rates? Does a man contribute to the rates "who cannot show he has in his possession, or is in a position to obtain, the means of decently supporting himself and his dependents?" Is that man capable of contributing to the rates? "If he is a lunatic or an idiot"—not very important contributors to the rates —"or owing to any infirmity appears likely to become a charge upon the rates or otherwise a detriment to the public." These are the people kept out by the Bill. Who was the hon. Gentleman who said they are going to contribute important sums to the rates?

AN HON. MEMBER: The Member for the Isle of Wight.

MAJOR SEELY: I said the existing——

The remainder of the hon. Member's remarks was rendered inaudible by cries of "Oh."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not want to pursue my quarrel with the hon. Gentleman. I think I have made at all events that part of my case clear, which I think is almost the most important part of the whole argument. In my view we have a right to keep out everybody who does not add to the strength of the community—the industrial, social, and intellectual strength of the community. I think we have a right, which we ought to exercse in the case of all the classes mentioned in the form of words which I have just read to the House; and I cannot conceive a more ludicrous inconsistency than for the same House of Commons to assent to these persons coming into the country who are to be a charge on the rates and at the same time charging the same rates with large sums of money for the purpose of emigrating Englishmen, Britons, from our shores. Let me grant that all these undesirable aliens have every merit that can be attributed to them. Poverty, I admit, is no crime; by itself if it involve a charge on the rates it might be no evil. But grant that the lunatic, the diseased, and all the other classes have no disqualification from becoming citizens of this country—are we to believe that they are better than our own citizens, our own flesh and blood, for the purpose of getting rid of whom we are charging our rates? I do not think it will bear argument. It is quite true that the number of areas where this evil presses hardly is not very large, and from that fact I dare say hon. Gentlemen have taken courage to oppose a Bill obviously just in its main outlines. But I think the generality of the country, even though they may not personally suffer from the evils which I have described, and which this Bill is intended to remedy, will have sufficient sympathy with those who do suffer to feel that this Bill is just in its inception, consistent with all sound principles of legislation, in no way violating our hereditary love of liberty or our hereditary desire to see that liberty spread throughout the whole earth as far as may be. And I believe we shall have, not merely in the division lobby to-night, but in all the struggles that may still await us before this Bill becomes law, not merely a majority of the House of Commons, but the sympathy of the great body of the English people.

Question put:—The House divided; Ayes, 211; Noes, 59. (Division List No. 146.)

AYES.

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hn. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. H. O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Captain Josceline F.
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A.J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Sir Alex. H. (Shropsh.)
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J.(Birm
Chamberlain, Rt.Hn.JA(Worc.
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hn. Thos. H. A. E.
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Rt. Hn. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Davies, Sir H. D. (Chatham)
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Sir T. R. (T'. Hamlets
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred D.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elliot, Hn. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Fergusson, Rt.Hn.Sir J.(Manc'r
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.)
Finlay, Sir R.B. (Inv'rn'ss B'hs
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredrk.
Gordon, Hn.J.E (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, MajEvans(T'rH'mlets
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs)
Gretton, John
Hall, Edward Marshall

Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R. (Dulwich)
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J.F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier, Hon. Jas. Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred.
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Kenyon, Hn. Geo. T. (Denbigh
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Lambton, Hn. Frederick Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson, Hn. H.L.W. (Mile End
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks, N.R
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants, Fareham
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsm'th
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Marks, Harry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, John Throgmorton
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
O'Malley, William
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Peel, Hn. W. R. Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rose, Charles Day
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos Myles
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, E. J. (Somerset)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stewart, Sir Mark J M'Taggart
Stock, James Henry
Strachey, Sir Edward
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Turnour, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C.E.H (Sheffield
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. H.
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Welby, Sir Chas. G.E. (Notts.)
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Black, Alexander William
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Crooks, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Doogan, P. C.
Ellice, Capt. E.C (S Andrw's Bghs
Ellis, John Edward (Notts)
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Grant, Corrie
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Harwood, George
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Horniman, Frederick John
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kitson, Sir James
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Levy, Maurice
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
Parrott, William
Priestley, Arthur
Richards, Thos. (W. Monm'th
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Robson, William Snowdon
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Seely, Maj. J.E.B. (Isle of Wight
Shackleton, David James
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C.R. (Northants
Sullivan, Donal
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—Sir Charles Dilke and Mr. Trevelyan.

Main Question put, and agreed to. Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

Adjourned at one minute after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 3rd May, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. James William Lowther, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Great Western Railway (Additional Powers) Bill (King's consent signified). Bill read the third time, and passed.

Heckmondwike Improvement Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Orphan Working School and Alexandra Orphanage Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed.

Grangemouth Waterworks and Burgh Extension Order Confirmation Bill. Read a second time; to be considered upon Friday.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill. "To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Banbury (Rural), Lunesdale (Rural), and Newport Pagnell (Rural), and the Easington and Sedgefield, the Lanchester, and the Stone Joint Hospital Districts," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time: and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 191.]

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill. "To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Carmarthen, Hexham, Liverpool, Lymm, Nantwich, and Widnes," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 192.]

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill. "To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to Belfast, the Belfast, Holywood, and Castlereagh United District, Cork (Rural), Downpatrick (Rural), Newtownards, and North Dublin (Rural)," presented by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland; supported by Mr. Walter Long; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 193.]

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill. "To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the Baltracey River, the River Lerr, and the Blackwater Drainage Districts, in the counties of Carlow, Kildare, and Meath," presented by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland; supported by Mr. Walter Long; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 194.]

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions for alteration; from Anstruther Easter; and Leith; to lie upon the Table.

ILLEGITIMATE BIRTHS IN WORKHOUSES.

Petition from St. Neots, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Ardrossan (two); Avoch; Bainsford; Barrhead (two); Berwick-upon-Tweed (two); Birsay; Boddam (two); Borrowstouness; Broughty Ferry; Buckie; Carnoustie; Castle Douglas; Castletown; Coalburn; Coupar Angus; Curron; Dalgety; Denny; Dumbarton; Dunfermline;

Dunipace and Denny; Dunkeld; Dunscore; Eaglesfield; Edinburgh (four); Edzell; Fairlie; Falkirk (six); Fergushill; Firth; Friockheim; Galston; Glasgow (five); Glengarnock; Glengowan; Grahamston; Halfway House; Harthill; Hoddom; Holm (two); Hurlford; Invergordon; Kilbirnie; Kilmalcolm; Kilmarnock; Kilmaurs; Kilsyth (two); Kirkpatrick; Kirriemuir (two); Lanark; Lanark Middle Ward; Lesmahagow; Lochgelly; Longhope; Lowick; Midmar; Motherwell; Muir of Ord; Musselburgh; Neilston; Newmilns; Newmilns and Greenholm; Newtyle; Nigg; Ochiltree; Perth (three); Port Glasgow (four); Port Gordon (three); Renfrew (three); Ross-shire; Rossie; St. Andrews; St. Margaret's Hope; Saltcoats; Scotstoun; Shotts; Skelmorlie (three); South Shields; Stenhousemuir; Stenness; Stirling; Stonehouse (two); Stornoway (four); Strathavon; Strathmore; Strichen; Stromness; Thornhill (two); Thurso (two); Ullapool; Wellbank; and Wishaw; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petitions against; from Alnwick; Biggleswade; Lindfield; and Nottingham; to lie upon the Table.

MILK DEPOTS (LONDON) BILL.

Petition from Woolwich, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Petition from Sheffield, against; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS (SUNDAY) BILL.

Petition from Bewdley, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NEWFOUNDLAND.

Copy presented, of Report on the Foreign Trade and Commerce of Newfoundland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

UNITED FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND AND THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND (LITIGATION) (ROYAL COMMISSION TO SIR JOHN CHEYNE).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 19th April; *Mr. Black*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 148.]

NAVY (GUNNERY).

Copy presented, of Result of Gunlayers Competition in His Majesty's Fleet, 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TURKEY (No. 2, 1905).

Copy presented, of further Correspondence respecting the Affairs of South-Eastern Europe [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3359 and 3360 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ULTIMUS HÆRES (SCOTLAND) (ACCOUNT AND LIST OF ESTATES).

Return ordered, "of Abstract Account of the receipts and payments of the King's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer in Scotland, in the year ended the 31st day of December, 1904, in the Administration of Estates and Treasure Trove on behalf of the Crown."

"And, of Alphabetical List of Estates which fell to the Crown as Ultimus Hæres in Scotland, administered by the King's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer, in the same year."—(*Mr. Victor Cavendish.*)

OUTRAGES (IRELAND).

Return ordered, "showing the number and nature of all Outrages and other Offences of an indictable character reported by the Police in each county in Ireland from the 1st day of December, 1904, to the 19th day of April, 1905, inclusive."—(*Mr. Walter Long.*)

CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD (IRELAND).

Return ordered, "showing, for each County in the Congested Districts, (1) the acreage of Untenanted and Tenanted Lands acquired by the Board since the passing of the Irish Land Act, 1903, to the 31st day of March, 1905, with a view to the enlargement of small holdings, and the amount of the purchase money for such lands; and (2) the acreage of Untenanted and Tenanted Lands for the purchase of which the Board is in negotiation with vendors."—(*Mr. Walter Long.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Returns of Public Revenue (Interception) and Gross Departmental Expenditure.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury can he agree to give the Returns of Public Revenue (Interception) and of Gross Departmental Expenditure, which are down on the Paper for to-morrow.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) I shall be able to give my hon. friend most of the information which he desires, but I would be much obliged if he could speak to me privately with reference to one or two points in the Return.

Irish National Teachers' Pension Fund.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will take into consideration, at the earliest opportunity, the advisability of placing the Irish National Teachers' Pension Fund on a basis that will ensure similar treatment to that given to disabled teachers in England and Scotland.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) I cannot undertake to propose any change in the arrangements with regard to the Pension Fund until we have before us the result of the quinquennial valuation which must be held at the end of the present year.

Accounts of General Lighthouse Fund.

MR. CHARLES McARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether the sums expended by the three Lighthouse Boards, as per Parliamentary Return presented 14th February, 1905, form part of the amounts charged as Head Office Expenses in the General Lighthouse Fund Account; and, if so, how the balance of the said amounts, as shown in the 1903–4 Account, is accounted for by each Board.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) Of the sums referred to by the hon. Member the item of £7,000 for Salaries of the Acting Elder Brethren of the Trinity House is the only one that forms part of the amount charged as Head Office Expenses in the General Lighthouse Fund Accounts. The other items are included under the heading Miscellaneous Expenses. The balance of the sums charged as Head Office Expenses consists of the salaries of the staff, printing, stationery, repairs, etc.

Foreigners holding British Pilotage Certificates.

MR. LLEWELLYN (Somersetshire, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he will state the number of foreigners holding British pilotage certificates on March 31st, 1905, and their several nationalities.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) In order to obtain the exact particulars up to March 31st, the Board of Trade have found it necessary to address inquiries to seventy-seven pilotage authorities. When replies have been received I shall be happy to communicate the result to my hon. friend.

Aliens Bill—Religious and Political Refugees.

MR. H. LAWSON (Tower Hamlets, Mile End): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the words "prosecution for an offence of a political character" in Clause 1, Subsection 3, of the Aliens Bill, covers prosecution for an offence of a religious character.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) As the Bill is worded, the Answer to this Question would depend on the facts of each individual case; but whether further definition is necessary is a question that can be discussed on the Amendments already on the Paper.

Woodford and Wanstead—Proposed Joint Hospital Board.

MR. LOUIS SINCLAIR (Essex, Romford): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that Wanstead and Woodford are adjoining urban districts having populations of 9,000 and 14,500 respectively; that Wanstead has ample isolation hospital accommodation and Woodford has none; that an inquiry was held in November last, under the Public Health Act, 1875, at the instigation of Woodford alone, and in disregard of the remonstrance of Wanstead; that His Majesty's inspector reported in favour of the Local Government Board making a compulsory Provisional Order for the formation of a joint hospital board for the two districts; that a letter from the Wanstead Urban Council and a petition from the ratepayers had been sent to the Local Government Board against the Order being made, Wanstead desiring to retain its own hospital and to maintain its own patients; and, if so, whether he will undertake, under the circumstances, that the Board will decline, at the instance of Woodford alone, and in face of the opposition of Wanstead, to make a compulsory Provisional Order (subject to confirmation by Parliament) for the formation of a joint hospital board for the districts of Wanstead and Woodford combined.

(*Answered by Mr. Grant Lawson.*) I am aware of the facts of this case, which are generally as stated in the Question. The matter is now under the consideration of the Local Government Board, but I cannot at present state what their decision will be.

Belmullet Police Force.

MR. O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the number of police ordinarily stationed in Belmullet, county Mayo, and if this number has been recently exceeded; and, if so, will he state the reason.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The fixed strength of the police in the district of Belmullet is forty-six. The present number is fifty. The increase has been necessitated by the outrages and boycotting which have recently taken place in the district.

Rural District Councillors as Extern Teachers of Male Evening Schools.

MR. O'KELLY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state whether any particular disability attaches to rural district councillors as extern teachers of male evening schools.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Under Rule 88 (b) of the Commissioners' Rules, rural district councillors cannot be recognised as national school teachers. This rule is held to disqualify such persons from recognition as teachers of evening schools.

Claims of Dutch Burghers for Goods Commandeered during South African War.

MR. MARKS (Kent, Thanet): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether complaints have reached him from Orange River Colony that receipts or vouchers given by British officers to Dutch burghers in respect of cattle or other property taken for Army purposes during the South African War still remain unpaid; how many complaints have been received; and how have they been dealt with; and whether he can state the number of receipts or vouchers issued in the colony; the number of them now for any reason remaining unpaid; and the amount of money which such unpaid receipts or vouchers represent.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) Complaints of this nature have reached me and, in reply to my inquiries, I have been informed that the great majority of them are based upon no reasonable grounds. As regards the remainder I am still in communication with the Governor of the Transvaal. Pending the receipt of the final Report of the Central Judicial Commission which has investigated the claims based on military receipts, I am not able to give the figures asked for by the hon. Member.

Jamaica Fruit Industry—Subsidy to Elder, Dempster Line.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that one of the main objects in subsidising the Elder, Dempster Line of steamers between Jamaica and Bristol, to the extent of £40,000 a year, was to enable the growers of bananas in Jamaica to have an alternative to selling their fruit to the American United Fruit Company, who were the only purchasers, and that this object has been entirely defeated by the Elder, Dempster Line arranging to purchase their fruit from the United Fruit Company, thereby reconstituting the control of the market held by the Americans; and whether, seeing that the small grower of bananas in Jamaica can only dispose of his fruit at 6d. to 9d. a bunch in consequence of the foregoing arrangements, he will consider the advisability of taking steps to secure for the Jamaica cultivator some benefit from the subsidy.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) The main object of subsidising the Jamaica Direct Service was to stimulate the fruit trade between the United Kingdom and the West Indies, and the effort has been successful. The contract provided that bananas should be bought for shipment by the subsidised steamers, and this provision is fulfilled. I consider that the Jamaica growers do receive benefit from the subsidy in the form of a market which would not otherwise be open to them, and that there is no reasonable ground for seeking to alter the terms of the contract.

Mail Contract to the West Indies.

MASTER OF ELIBANK (Edinburgh, Midlothian): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will state in detail the amount of the annual subsidies paid to the Royal Mail Steamship Company by the Governments of the West Indies and British Guiana respectively, and also whether he will state whether any of these Governments approves the new contracts with the Elder, Dempster Line; and, if so, which Government; and whether such approval was carried by the nominated official vote, acting under instructions.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) The annual contributions at present made by the Colonial Governments to the subsidy paid by His Majesty's Government to the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company are as follows—

	£
Trinidad (including a special contribution of £5,000 paid to the company for placing the colony on their main line)	9,600
British Guiana	4,200
Barbados	4,000
Jamaica	2,100
Grenada	1,000
St. Lucia	1,000
Antigua	1,000
St. Vincent	450
Dominica	450
St. Kitts-Nevis . . .	550
Montserrat	200
Virgin Islands . . .	50

I am not at present in a position to answer the remainder of the hon. Member's Question.

Sandhurst Royal Military College—Cadets reported to the Commandant.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state how many times the Sergeant-Major of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, has made reports to the Commandant against the cadets in training since January 1st this year; and what was the nature of the complaints made.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The matters alluded to in the Question are dealt with by the Commandant, with whose discretion I am not prepared to interfere. I cannot, therefore, undertake to give the hon. Member the required information.

The Jamaica Garrison.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is proposed to withdraw any of the British troops at present stationed in Jamaica, or otherwise reduce the military force now quartered in the colony.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) It is proposed to withdraw the three companies of British infantry quartered there, and to replace them by four companies of the West India Regiment.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Military Expenditure in South Africa.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the account on page 130 of the Army Appropriation Account, 1903–4, showing that under ten Army Votes the military expenditure in South Africa amounted in the year 1903–4 to £7,760,653; whether he is aware that this excludes headquarter administrative expenses, deferred pay and recruiting expenses, non-effective charges, and expenditure under the Military Works Acts; and whether he can say what sum is to be added to the £7,760,653 in respect of these four items, and what the total expenditure for the year was when these additions are made; and can he say what the similar total military expenditure on South Africa was for the year 1904–5, and what it is estimated to be for the year 1905–6.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): A note is appended to the statement referred to by the hon. Member to the effect that the items mentioned in his Question are not included in the statement. It is not possible to say how much of the expenditure incurred in any year on headquarter administration expenses, deferred pay and recruiting expenses or non-effective charges, was incurred on account of South Africa. The expenditure there under the Military Works Acts in 1903–4 was £1,424,000, and that in 1904–5 is estimated at £1,191,000. The probable expenditure under the Military Works Acts in 1905–6 cannot at present be stated.

Reduction of Tea Duty—Clearances from Bond.

MR. SLACK (Hertfordshire, St. Albans): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, having regard to the fact that the 1st day of July, 1905, will be a Saturday, and that there will therefore be only four and a-half working hours on that day from the time the Customs House opens at 10 a.m. until 2.30 p.m., when the railway companies cease collecting goods, arrangements will be made whereby the duty on tea at the reduced rate of 6d. per pound may be paid at the Customs House on Friday, June 30th, provided that delivery of such tea is not taken till the following day, so as to facilitate those interested in the tea trade in the execution of their orders.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): The hon. Member will probably have learned from the newspapers that the Board of Customs have already instructed their officers that on tea required for delivery on or after July 1st next, the reduced rate of duty, 6d. per pound, may be accepted, as a deposit, prior to that date. Arrangements will be made for the issue early on July 1st of the delivery orders for parcels of tea upon which the duty has thus been deposited.

West Indian Patent-Still Spirit.

MR. NOLAN (Louth, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he proposes to introduce any measures to facilitate the importation of West Indian patent-still spirit into the United Kingdom for industrial purposes; and whether he has any intention of removing the extra duty of 4d. per gallon paid upon same.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: It is not proposed to introduce any measure giving preferential treatment to West Indian spirit. But if the proposals of the Industrial Alcohol Committee are adopted by Parliament, spirit from the West Indies will derive a substantial benefit from the new arrangements, in common with all other spirit, whether imported or home-made.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: When will the Bill be brought in?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: As soon as it is ready. It is now being prepared.

Returns of Public Revenue (Interception) and Gross Departmental Expenditure.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury can he agree to give the Returns of Public Revenue (Interception) and of Gross

Departmental Expenditure, which are down on the Paper for to-morrow.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.): I shall be able to give my hon. friend most of the information which he desires, but I would be much obliged if he could speak to me privately with reference to one or two points in the Return.

Scotland and the Unemployed Bill.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he can state on what ground Scotland is excluded from the operation of the Unemployed Workmen's Bill; and whether the Government contemplate separate legislation to extend its provisions to Scotland.

*THE LORD-ADVOCATE (Mr. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgton): The Secretary for Scotland is not satisfied that the conditions prevailing in Scotland at the present time are such as to require special legislation in the direction contemplated by the hon. Member.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): Is it intended to introduce a similar Bill for Scotland in the near future?

*MR. SCOTT DICKSON: I am afraid I can give no promise.

Youghal Auxiliary Lunatic Asylum.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if any change has been made in the arrangement which permitted Dr. Kelly, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Cloyne, to fit out at the public expense a vacant industrial school at Youghal for the reception of insane patients, and if Dr. Kelly is paid a capitation grant for each patient; whether he is aware that the patients are nursed by nuns who have had no previous training in such duties, that there is no resident medical superintendent, and that the medical cure of the patients is under the control of a visiting physician, who has had no previous training in the diseases of the insane, although visiting physicians have been allowed to die out in all the other Irish and British asylums; that the house built at Youghal for the resident medical superintendent is occupied by a chaplain whose chief duty is to look after the spiritual welfare of the nuns; that the Under-Secretary for Ireland has already remonstrated with the Bishop of Cloyne against these irregularities; if so, will he say whether they have the approval of the inspectors; and if he will take such steps as are necessary to restore the lunatics now in charge of the Bishop of Cloyne to proper supervision and control.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the desirability of postponing his Answer until the Question is made more intelligible? If it refers to the Bishop of Cloyne it cannot refer to Dr. Kelly, and *vice versâ.*

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): The inaccuracy to which the hon. Member refers does not make it impossible to answer the Question.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: I hope the right hon. Gentleman will be as charitable to Questions from this side of the House.

MR. WALTER LONG: In reply to my hon. friend's Question of February 23rd[†] last, my right hon. friend the Member for Dover made a very full statement on this matter, which substantially covers the ground of the present Question. It is only necessary to repeat that the two points connected with the administration of this auxiliary asylum in regard to which the inspectors have raised objection are, first, the appointment of a visiting instead of a resident medical officer, and, secondly, the resolutions of the committee of management relieving the resident medical superintendent of the Cork Asylum from all responsibility for the discipline and domestic management of the auxiliary. In regard to the first, the consent of the Lord-Lieutenant to the appointment of a visiting medical officer has only been given as a tentative measure which will be open to reconsideration if the arrangement should prove defective; and as to the second, the committee have been informed that the resolutions are illegal, and have been called upon to correct the illegality. The Under-Secretary has made representations on the subject to Dr. Kelly, Bishop of Ross, who is a member of the committee. The capitation grant is payable to the county council.

[†] See (4) *Debates*, cxli., 1107.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Can the right hon. Gentleman say where these lunatics were before they were brought to this asylum, and under what circumstances they were transferred?

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): And are the patients confined in this auxiliary asylum the harmless insane?

MR. WALTER LONG: I believe so.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Was not a clause put into the Local Government (Ireland) Act of 1889, the very object of which was that the harmless insane should be treated in such auxiliary asylums?

MR. WALTER LONG: Obviously I must refer to the clause before I answer that Question. And in order to reply to the hon. Member for East Mayo I must refer to the authorities on the spot.

MR. SLOAN: As the Bishop has been remonstrated with on this matter, does the Irish Executive intend to reconsider the decision come to?

MR. WALTER LONG: The arrangement has been consented to by the Lord-Lieutenant as a temporary one, and obviously I can make no announcement of a final decision by the Irish Executive until there has been time to judge the results of the experiment.

MR. SLOAN: Are you inquiring into it?

MR. WALTER LONG: It is the business of the Irish Executive to follow the operation.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the arrangements in connection with this auxiliary asylum were carried out by the Cork County Council, and have given complete satisfaction? Is he aware also that it is inaccurate to say that the nurses are untrained, seeing that some of them possess certificates?

MR. WALTER LONG: I must ask for notice of any further Question.

Manufacture of Alcohol from Potatoes in Ireland.

MR. NOLAN: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that millions of tons of potatoes are annually used in Germany for the manufacture of crude alcohol for motoring and manufacturing purposes; and whether, seeing that Ireland is a potato-growing country, the restrictions on the making of spirit there for industrial purposes can be relaxed in such a way as to place Ireland in a position to compete with Germany and other foreign countries.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: In Paragraph 4 of their recently presented Report, the Industrial Alcohol Committee stated that they were satisfied "that in the present agricultural conditions of this country it would not be possible to found a profitable industry on the employment of potatoes as a material for distillation." The evidence on which this conclusion was based will be found in Questions 5656–5854 of the Minutes of Evidence. Briefly, it may be said that it would not pay to make spirit from potatoes unless the potatoes could be purchased at a price not exceeding about £1 per ton. In Ireland potatoes fetch not less than £2 per ton.

Irish National Teachers' Pension Fund.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will take into consideration, at the earliest opportunity, the advisability of placing the Irish National Teachers' Pension Fund on a basis that will ensure similar treatment to that given to disabled teachers in England and Scotland.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH said the Treasury could not undertake to make any change until they had the results of the valuation which would be made this year.

Mr. SLOAN: In what month?

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH: December.

Government Redistribution Proposals.

Mr. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when he intends to introduce his Redistribution proposals; and whether he intends to proceed by Bill, Resolution, or otherwise.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): I cannot fix any date for dealing with this subject, but I can inform the hon. Gentleman that we propose to deal with it by Resolution and not by Bill, which, indeed, is the only possible method.

Dursey Island Eviction.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I desire to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state what were the special circumstances for giving the use of the Government vessel "Storm Cock" for the purpose of conveying an armed force to Dursey Island for the eviction of one tenant from his holding; what was the amount of rent due; what has been the cost, up to date, of this armed force, and of the transport; whether any offer of settlement was made by the Congested Districts Board to the landlord of this estate before the eviction; and whether under the circumstances he will at once withdraw the armed force from the island, and also withdraw the "Storm Cock" from the service of the landlord for eviction purposes, and will he charge the landlord for the use of the vessel up to the present.

Mr. WALTER LONG: I only received notice of this Question just before the House met. The services of a Government vessel were requisitioned by the sheriff of the county in the execution of a decree of the Superior Court. The Admiralty placed the vessel at the disposal of the sheriff, as they were bound in law to do. The police will remain on the island so long as they are required for the protection of the sheriff's officers. I am unable to give the information desired in the remainder of the Question at such short notice and without making local inquiry.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: I assume that the facts must have been presented to the right hon. Gentleman before he sanctioned the use of the armed forces of the Crown, and I, therefore, beg to ask leave to move the adjournment of the House in order to call attention to a definite matter of urgent public importance—namely, "the action of the Irish Executive in furnishing a Government vessel for the conveyance of an armed force to Dursey Island for the purpose of assisting the landlord to evict one of his tenants, and the maintenance of the armed force on the island."

The pleasure of the House not having been signified, Mr. Deputy-Speaker called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than forty Members having accordingly risen,

The Motion stood over, under Standing Order No. 10, until the Evening Sitting, this day.

NEW BILLS.

COTTAGE HOMES BILL.

"To authorise the provision of Cottage Homes for the Aged Poor," presented by Mr. John Hutton; supported by Mr. Wharton, Mr. Brigg, Sir Ernest Flower, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Goulding, Mr. Paulton, Mr. Joseph Pease, Mr. T. W. Russell, and Sir William Wilson-Todd; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, May 31st, and to be printed. [Bill 195.]

EDUCATION (PROVISION OF MEALS) (No. 2) BILL.

"To amend The Education Act, 1902," presented by Mr. Arthur Henderson; supported by Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Crooks, Mr. Bell, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. John Wilson, (Durham), Mr. Johnson, Mr. Broadhurst, Sir John Gorst, Mr. Thomas Richards, Dr. Macnamara, and Mr. Keir Hardie; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 196.]

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (FEEDING OF CHILDREN) (No. 2) BILL.

"To make provision for the Feeding of Children in Public Elementary Schools," presented by Mr. Claude Hay; supported by Mr. James Hope, Dr. Macnamara, Sir Albert Rollit, Sir Ernest Flower, Mr. Coghill, and Mr. Ridley; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 197.]

WAYS AND MEANS [April 10th] REPORT.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [April 12th], "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the First Resolution:—

EXCHEQUER BONDS.

1. "That for the purpose of paying off any Exchequer bonds issued under the Supplemental War Loan Acts of 1900, any sums not exceeding ten million pounds be raised by the issue of Exchequer bonds to be current, subject to the provisions for the redemption of the total issue, for a period of ten years, and that in each year of that period one-tenth part of the total issue of the new bonds be drawn for repayment and redeemed by the application for the purpose of the requisite part of the new sinking fund, and that the permanent annual charge for the National Debt be increased so as to be £28,000,000. That any expenses incurred in connection with raising or paying off any such sums, and the principal of and interest on any such sums, be charged on the Consolidated Fund, and, as to the interest, be paid as part of the permanent annual charge for the National Debt."

Question again proposed.

Mr. COHEN (Islington, E.) said he, personally, did not approve of the manner in which the bonds were issued, because he thought it was not calculated to secure them the most favourable terms. But at the same time he wished to congratulate the Chancellor of the Exchequer on his action in providing the means, by the present Resolution, of ensuring the absolute automatic repayment of the colossal debt which was now pressing on the finances of the country. Concurrently with expenditure there ought always to be provision for the extinction of debt. Let them spend as much as they liked, but let it be spent out of income and not out of capital. Year after year seven or eight millions were spent in a way which was not legitimate, and since the Chancellor of the Exchequer was one of the original sinners in the offence which was committed by the Public Works Loan expenditure he hoped he would now apply himself with all the greater vigour to reforming this unsound method of voting the expenditure of the country. Undoubtedly reform was needed in the present system. He would not stay to inquire whether it was right for the Admiralty or the War Office——

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order, Order! The hon. Gentleman is not entitled now to discuss the general financial position of the country. He must confine himself strictly to the question of the issue of these Exchequer bonds.

Mr. COHEN regretted that he had gone beyond the limit of the debate. He would conclude by saying that the gratitude of the country and of the House was due to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the almost new system he was introducing for the repayment of debt.

Mr. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.) pointed out that the remarks of the hon. Member were a reminder to the House that while the Chancellor of the Exchequer was making provision on one hand for the repayment of debt, on the other he was incurring debt. But how was it that the House was discussing now this Resolution on Report when the ten millions of bonds had been issued? Had the Law Officers of the Crown been present he would have asked them if there was any precedent for such a proceeding. Could the Chancellor of the Exchequer give any authority for issuing these bonds before he obtained the approval of the House to the Resolution passed in Committee? He believed that no precedent could be quoted. Even if the Resolution, however, were refused by the House it would be now impossible to rescind the contract. The Chancellor of the Exchequer could not go into the market and repay the money to those who had subscribed for the bonds. He also suggested that in making these financial arrangements for the issue of bonds the payment of interest should be made the same for all persons who took them. The element of lottery speculation at present introduced was not a wise arrangement. There was to be a ten years currency of the bonds. What was the result? The bonds were issued at $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. and were subscribed at 98. Those which were drawn at the end of the first year would receive repayment at par in addition to the $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. interest; practically they would get a little over 4 per cent. on their investment, while on the other hand the bonds drawn last would produce only about $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. The fact that business men did not approve of these methods was shown by the fact that the subscription for the bonds was so small. He certainly did not think it wise to introduce this lottery system into our financial arrangements.

*Mr. RITCHIE (Croydon) said that the hon. Member was under an entire misapprehension as to the practice governing the issue of loans. It was the practice, when the money was being borrowed, for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to act upon the Resolution passed in Committee, and not to wait for its confirmation in the House or in the Bill. The reason for this was obvious. To have the issuing of a loan hanging for an indefinite period over the market was very prejudicial in the public interest. He had himself when at the Treasury acted on the principle indicated, and he believed that previous Chancellors of the Exchequer had followed the same procedure. With regard to the question of the mode in which the money had been borrowed he confessed that he was not quite sure that the proper course had been adopted. He doubted whether he would have followed the method adopted by his right hon. friend, and he certainly thought that better terms might have been secured had a different method and another moment been chosen for issue. He thought that the amount of interest payable under this system of borrowing was higher than the figure at which the Treasury ought to have been able to borrow. It was not a fair argument to single out for contrast the individual who drew his bonds the first year. The true method of judging the system was to take the average in the proportion which might be drawn every year. He reckoned that the amount of interest paid, taking into account commissions and other matters, was a little over £3 2s. 6d. In his judgment that was rather an extravagant figure for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to pay, though he knew well the great difficulties which surrounded the subject, and the various opinions which were held as to the best method of dealing with the question. He was certain that his right hon. friend had taken the best advice procurable, and had acted in the way he thought best for the public interest. Personally he did not think that the City believed it to be either the right method or the right time to choose. The money could have been borrowed on somewhat better terms. As to the £10,000,000, he was glad that his right hon. friend had, notwithstanding many temptations to the contrary, adopted a method by which a considerable additional sum would be available for the repayment of debt. It might be thought that he was uttering an opinion contrary to the view he expressed when at the Exchequer; but it must be remembered that at that time there was every expectation that we should receive large repayments on account of the £30,000,000 from the Transvaal. He had acted not only on the strong views held at the Colonial Office at the time, but he was extremely careful to go through all the reports which came from Lord Milner. He was then fully persuaded that the hopes he expressed as to the revenue of the Transvaal would be realised.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): The right hon. Gentleman gave an actual pledge that the money would be forthcoming.

*Mr. RITCHIE denied that he went so far as that. What he said amounted to much less than a pledge. He merely stated the facts. He attached more importance to the payment of the first £10,000,000 than to the exact period when the other instalments would be forthcoming. Occupying the position he did, it would have been foolish for him not to have expressed a belief that the money would be forthcoming. Unfortunately the money had not been forthcoming, but no one could be surprised at the fact, having regard to the state of finances in the Transvaal. It would be a monstrous thing to saddle the Transvaal with this large debt payment every year when its finances were hardly in a condition to meet the ordinary expenditure of the country. It seemed to him, therefore, that in present circumstances nothing remained for the Chancellor of the Exchequer but to make some other provision for the extinction of debt. His right hon. friend had acted most wisely in seeking to discharge a portion of the Debt in the way he had provided, although, as he had said, he felt that the time was not well chosen for the issue, and more had been paid for the accommodation than ought to have been.

*MR. BLACK (Banffshire) said the Conservative predecessors of the Chancellor of the Exchequer had shown a consistent tendency to spoil the Sinking Fund. It was therefore a relief to find that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had taken a small step in the right direction; but the question was whether the step was large enough, and the point he desired to make was, that in place of this £10,000,000 being met by a further borrowing, a very much larger sum ought to have been met out of current taxation if we were to put ourselves in at all a good position financially. If the South African War had resulted in our acquiring an asset, there might have been something said for deferring the repayment of the debt incurred for that war; but instead of it being an asset, we found it a huge liability, for the holding of it implied the employment of about 25,000 soldiers there at a cost of something like £5,000,000 a year. In October, 1899, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham put forward as a reason for engaging in the war that we should avoid having so large a garrison in South Africa if we managed to beat our foes; but, instead of having effected this, we were still obliged to keep up a large garrison there, and the country, instead of being an asset, was a liability.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is allowing himself too much licence. He is not entitled to review the whole policy of the war.

MR. BLACK said he hoped he would be in order in pointing out that our indebtedness was not decreasing. In 1904 the Debt amounted to £794,000,000 as against £798,000,000 in 1903. Under ordinary circumstances one would have thought that this decrease would have been effected by the operation of the Sinking Fund, but it was not so effected; it was almost entirely due to £3,000,000 recovered from the Transvaal. In 1905 they found the Debt had again increased to £796,000,000, so that during the whole of these years we had not paid off a single penny; on the contrary, we had diminished our assets, while our Debt remained practically the same. What was the position in the current year? We should have only paid off £468,000, and this in the piping times of peace. The Chancellor of the Exchequer seemed to deal with the matter of national finance as if the nation were a person with a secure title, and perhaps with a mortgage on his estate; and, so long as he paid the interest on the mortgage, kept the repairs going, and kept the household up, he thought he did well. But this was far from being the position of a nation, and particularly this nation. We were in the position of a person whose title was subject to attack, and who might be called upon to defend his title at a cost that might be greater than the whole value of his estate; and unless this country made due provision in times of peace and prosperity by the reduction of debt or the accumulation of assets we should find ourselves without the sinews of war when we most needed them. At the present moment our indebtedness amounted to £796,000,000, but to this there was to be added the indebtedness of local bodies, amounting to very little less than £300,000,000, making a total of something like £1,100,000,000, or more than £25 per head of the population or £120 per householder. How many householders were there possessed of assets to the extent of £120, their rateable quota to the National Debt? He ventured to say there were comparatively few. With the single exception of France, he thought, too, it would be found that all our neighbours were better off in this respect. Russia, before the war, was only indebted to the extent of some £16 or £17 per householder; Germany £12, France £150, and Italy £80. He agreed that, comparing national wealth with national indebtedness, our position was not quite so bad, but they had to look at what that wealth consisted of. France's national wealth consisted largely of landed property which could not be moved out of the country; but ours consisted to a large extent of fugitive wealth, in the shape of industrial capital, holdings in Colonial or Foreign Government securities, or interests of various kinds in undertakings outside the country which, if taxed too heavily, in sudden emergency would cross the border. Therefore we ought to make provision year by year for our national requirements, and this was exactly what the Chancellor of the Exchequer failed to realise, even in the provision which had been so much praised. If he had added £5,000,000 to the Sinking Fund it might have come approximately to what was required. There were only two ways of sound finance—either to diminish expenditure or increase income; and he hoped another year the Chancellor of the Exchequer would do a little more to put the finances of the nation in a sound position, and so furnish us with what were, after all, the true sinews of war.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES next rose.

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Lynn Regis has exhausted his right of speech.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Then if I am not to be heard, I presume the Chancellor of the Exchequer cannot speak.

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Only with the leave of the House.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: What occurred on the last occasion was that if a Question was asked one could not get an Answer. The debate was a very short one.

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The hon. Member's speech was a short one, but it occupied half a column of *Hansard*, and therefore can hardly be looked upon as simply a Question. The hon. Member for Halifax also spoke on that occasion. I have refreshed my memory by looking up the report.

Mr. WHITLEY (Halifax): I too have refreshed my memory, and I think the right hon. Gentleman will find I merely urged reasons against proceeding with the matter at that particular moment, and the Chancellor agreed with me.

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: But still the speech was made on the Motion before the House.

Mr. WHITLEY: I simply appealed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer not to proceed with the Motion. I only indicated points which needed to be discussed and said the ten minutes which remained was not sufficient time for the discussion.

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: It was open to the hon. Member to continue his observations. I am afraid I cannot take into account the quality of a speech. All I can say is that the hon. Member did speak and that his speech is reported to the extent of one-third of a column. He therefore technically exhausted his right.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: May I speak with the indulgence of the House?

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: If the hon. Member has the leave of the House it is not for me to interfere.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES thanked the House for permitting him to speak and said that in view of that indulgence he felt that his remarks should not be lengthy. He would endeavour to keep to the point of the Resolution—viz., the specific method of dealing with a specific portion of debt. It was proposed to deal with the unfunded portion of the Debt by an entirely new method, by issuing Treasury bonds to the extent of £10,000,000 under wholly new conditions. He was not fond of these new-fangled methods of finance, he was not an admirer of the new devices. Let them examine this matter upon its merits. He understood that the rate of interest was governed by the War Loans Act of 1900. The rate of interest of these £10,000,000 of bonds was therefore $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent., and the price obtained for them was about 98·6.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): £98 13s. 10d.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Say then 98·7. On an average the holder would receive something over 3 per cent. for his money, although those paid off in the first year would realise over 4 per cent. He had some grievance as to the form of issue. This was the first time in modern financial history that England had trusted to a lottery for raising money. These were eminently lottery bonds, and he was only surprised that they did not fetch a higher price. The right hon. Member for Croydon had partly explained that by intimating that the Treasury made a serious mistake and issued these bonds under wrong conditions at a wrong time. That was a very serious allegation, and he was sure the Chancellor of the Exchequer would feel that it needed a serious answer, for if the Treasury existed for anything at all, it was to see that issues of this kind were made at the right time under the right conditions. Another point was that by the War Loans Act, 1900, £13,000,000 of Treasury bills and bonds, which this issue was partially to meet, were to be repaid on April 5th, 1910, but this £10,000,000 was to run until 1915, and therefore the term of repayment was extended by five years.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: May I be permitted to interrupt the hon. Gentleman? The Exchequer bonds were redeemable within six years, and some of them have already been redeemed. In the Supplementary War Loans Act there is a provision allowing new bonds of a similar amount to be issued for the purpose of redeeming them.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that did not effect his point. The "Rake's Progress" was quite complete. The Treasury issued the bonds and repaid them by reborrowing. They were in the position of a man who said, "I owe you half-a-crown: if you will lend me the money I will repay you." He submitted he was right in his contention that this was a renewal of debt with five years longer for repayment. The wiles of the Treasury were numerous; it was not always easy to follow the intricacies of its finance. But the disentangled fact remained. Now this issue was made for the especial purpose of dealing with the Unfunded Debt, and that debt undoubtedly required serious attention. Although the Funded Debt had decreased in the last ten years, the Unfunded Debt had increased enormously during the same period, and by much more than the Funded Debt had diminished, so that the total debt was a great deal more than it was. While the Funded Debt had in the year ending March 31st, 1905, been reduced from £637,600,000 to £635,600,000, which showed a reduction of £2,000,000, the Unfunded Debt of all sorts had been increased in the same year by over £4,000,000, mainly in the loans for Works. So that while we apparently owed £2,000,000 less if the Funded Debt were alone regarded, yet, when the whole debt was considered, we really owed above £2,000,000 more. The Unfunded Debt was the worst form of debt and the most dangerous, and it was increasing alarmingly. The Unfunded Debt stood on March 31st, 1905, at £161,000,000 as compared with £156,700,000 in 1904 and £79,000,000 in 1894, and it was to be increased by at least £8,000,000 this year for what was called capital expenditure on works. The Budget was quite sound, as far as it went it was plain, honest, and straightforward, but it did not go by any means far enough in the direction of retrenchment and of making provision to meet the Debt. He would warn the House and the Chancellor of the Exchequer to beware of new methods of meeting debt; the only real way to raise money was to have new taxation or to omit taking off existing taxation. If they took the total national indebtedness, quite apart from local indebtedness, they would find that with Funded and Unfunded Debt, contingent liabilities, and guaranteed loans this country was at the present moment under a load of liability which nearly approached £1,000,000,000. He thought the provision for the redemption of the Debt was insufficient. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer had to deal with the expenditure which the House had accepted or would accept. Hon. Gentlemen opposite pretended to have a monopoly of the desire for peace, retrenchment, and reform. That was not so. He could assure them that on his side of the House there were as good advocates of peace, retrenchment, and reform as any that could be found on the other side. He himself felt very considerable apprehension on this matter. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had shown the right spirit. The Treasury, he believed, was animated by an absolutely correct view of our finances; indeed, he should call this a sound Treasury Budget. The right hon. Gentleman was so far entitled to credit, but he begged him to persevere in the right direction, to stiffen his back, to set up his upper lip against the Departments, and to learn to refuse them all they wanted. He begged the right hon. Gentleman to take to heart the example of the Admiralty, which had succeeded, they were told, in increasing the efficiency of the Navy while reducing the expenditure by £3,500,000. That was the direction in which they must primarily look. If that direction was successfully pursued then, and then alone, would they get a reduction of debt.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said the debate that afternoon had confined itself to two parts, namely, first, the general indebtness of the country, and, second, the particular manner in which the Exchequer bonds had been created and issued. He did not intend to go at length into the first question, because on the Second Reading of the Finance Bill, or in Committee, there would be better opportunities of dealing with that matter than upon a Resolution. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon stated that in consequence of the failure of the Transvaal to pay the £30,000,000 of indebtedness, his calculation of two years ago of the annual amount that ought to be provided towards the redemption of the Debt had largely broken down. That was to say, the Debt was not, under the present conditions, being redeemed in the way he had intended or desired. In supporting the proposal to give an additional £1,000,000 annually to the reduction of debt, he wanted to comment on the fact that many Members on both sides of the House did not consider that this sum ought to be taken as against the £30,000,000 which was expected from the Transvaal. Two years ago, even including the £30,000,000, they did not consider that the right hon. Gentlemen was making sufficient provision for the reduction of debt. Quite apart from that question, they would support the Chancellor of the Exchequer in adding £1,000,000 to the reduction of debt. The figures given by the hon. Member for King's Lynn were of very serious moment to the country. The hon. Member's statement, broadly speaking, amounted to this. The war had cost £260,000,000, and, apart from the war cost, our indebtedness was exactly the same now as it was before the war took place. At the present moment we had not redeemed a single million of the charge which the Debt had thrown upon the country. Before the war the debt charge was £23,000,000 a year. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon increased that to £27,000,000, the increase of £4,000,000 representing the interest on the war debt. The charge should have been £4,500,000. The total net burden to the taxpayer, quite apart from the question of how much went to the reduction of debt or for interest at the present moment, was only £500,000 a year more than before the war period.

As to the other point—the issue of Exchequer bonds—he ventured to remark when the subject was before the House at an earlier period that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was making a mistake in creating a particular sinking fund in respect of these bonds. In his opinion it was a mistake to make appropriations of particular sums to particular purposes. What would happen? It might very well happen that in the next ten years it might be better finance, and more economical, to apply another £1,000,000 to the reduction of debt rather than to the redemption of these Exchequer bonds, and, therefore, he thought it was a pity that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had tied his hands and those of his successors as to the way this £1,000,000 might be applied to the redemption of debt. The right hon. Gentleman's chief argument was that it would prevent some subsequent Chancellor of the Exchequer from robbing the Sinking Fund. He could only say, speaking from the experience of the past, that if they had a predatory Chancellor of the Exchequer nothing would stand in the way of his suspending the Sinking Fund and using it another way. The £10,000,000 of Exchequer bonds had, as had already been shown, been issued at a price which was very costly to the British taxpayer. The price was $3\frac{1}{8}$ per cent., whereas the ordinary credit of the country was very considerably below that sum. That was on account of the particular form in which the bonds had been issued, namely, for ten years with a liability to be paid at any time within the period. That was a distinctly unattractive form of investment and it accounted for the dearer price we had to pay for interest. There was force in what had been stated by one or two previous speakers, namely, that this was the first time since the days of Pitt that we were actually issuing lottery bonds. Some holders would be fortunate enough to have their bonds drawn earlier than others, who might have to go through the full currency of the bonds. He did not think that was a system which was altogether satisfactory to our modern ideas. We had at the present moment too many forms of bonds and complications in regard to the issue of our Debt, and it was to be regretted that another had been created. It seemed to him to be a step in the wrong direction. He did not think this new form would be very negotiable. The Chancellor of the Exchequer deserved full credit for having added £1,000,000 a year to the sum devoted to the diminution of debt, but he did not seem to have been well advised in regard to the method of issuing the Exchequer bonds.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he hoped the House would facilitate the progress of these Resolutions, of which the one they were discussing was only the first on the Paper. There were one or two points raised in the course of the discussion to which it was necessary for him to make some reply. The first was in regard to the amount which was allocated in his Budget proposals for the redemption of the National Debt. That amount must be judged not merely by the intrinsic sum, but by the proportion which it bore to the Debt for the service of which it was appointed. Judged in that way, he thought the sum set aside this year as Sinking Fund would bear comparison with anything that they had been accustomed to do in recent years. It was not easy to go back further than 1888–89, because in that year great changes were made in the conversion scheme. In that year, which he might call the heyday of the Sinking Fund, the amount available for the redemption of dead-weight debt was £7,577,000, which was 1·19 per cent. of the dead-weight debt. With the addition which he had proposed to the fixed debt charge of £1,000,000 in the current year, the Sinking Fund now amounted to £8,650,000, which was 1·14 per cent. of the dead-weight charge, and it would, in fact, bear a larger proportion to the dead-weight debt than it had borne in any but two of the whole series of years beginning with 1888–89. Of course, as the Sinking Fund operated to redeem the Debt it automatically reduced the amount required for interest and increased the Sinking Fund available in subsequent years.

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon referred to the anticipation which he had entertained of receiving an earlier payment of the Transvaal war contribution. Supposing that anticipation had been realised and £20,000,000 of that contribution had already been paid, that sum would have been devoted to redeeming some of the floating debt that was costing us on the average 3 per cent. per annum, and there would have been £600,000 less required for interest and £600,000 more available for the reduction of debt than there were before he made his proposals to the House. Against that £600,000 he had set his proposal to vote £1,000,000. Whether that was sufficient or insufficient, he was asking the House to do something more than was contemplated by his right hon. friend the Member for Croydon.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON said if the anticipations of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon had been realised, next year the third instalment of the contribution would have been paid.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he was dealing with the situation as it was at present. If they were to look forward to another year they must consider what was going to happen in the course of that year. He did not propose this addition to the Sinking Fund in lieu of or as an alternative to the Transvaal war contribution. He thought it would have been wrong to ask the Transvaal to pay that contribution in the circumstances of the past year. The Government thought it would be inexpedient and impolitic to impose by the authority of that House in a purely nominated Assembly an obligation on the Transvaal which they expected the Transvaal voluntarily to assume in its own representative Assembly.

Sir ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs): We are all agreed.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he was very glad they were all agreed. He would not name a date, but with the returning prosperity of the Transvaal he did not doubt that our fellow-citizens there would make their contribution to the expenses of that great war, and that the contribution would be available, in addition to the effort which he was asking this country to make, for the reduction of the Debt.

Sir ROBERT REID said he wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he was able to compare the net diminution of the entire debt of the country in 1888–89 with the net diminution of the entire debt of the country in the present year.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said the figures for 1888–89 were not before him, but he could obtain them if the hon. and learned Gentleman would put a Question on the Paper. The estimate for the special Sinking Fund applicable to the debt outside the fixed debt charge for the year 1905–6 was £1,683,000. If they added that sum to the £8,650,000 included in the fixed debt charge, they would obtain a total of £10,333,000, which was the amount the House was asked to vote in reduction of debt in the current year. In his opinion that was not an inadequate amount for the country to allocate to that purpose in the circumstances of the present time; and he thought that opinion in circles best competent to judge outside that House would support him, not merely in increasing the Sinking Fund, but in the amount of the increase which he had proposed to the House.

The hon. Member for North Monmouth had asked him whether there was any precedent for proceeding with the issue of a loan in circumstances such as those in which the issue of Exchequer bonds was made. There were several precedents for proceeding, before the sanction of the House was complete, at the exact moment at which he had proceeded. In 1901 the Resolution authorising the issue of £60,000,000 of Consols was taken on April 19th, the issue was made on April 20th, the Report of the Committee's Resolution was not taken until April 29th, and the Royal assent was not given until August 17th in the same year. There were obvious reasons, as his right hon. friend the Member for Croydon had pointed out, why it was frequently desirable to proceed with any issue of this kind as soon as notice of the intention of the Government had been given. It was no doubt an inconvenience to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Treasury sometimes that they could not proceed at the moment which they themselves would most desire; but they were bound to come to the House of Commons before they could invite tenders, and the fact of their having to disclose their intentions to the House of Commons on a particular date, fixed for other reasons, might force them to make an issue at an earlier moment than they would otherwise have chosen. But, be that as it might, the precedent on which he was able to found himself was there.

He must say a brief word as to the time and form of the issue. He did not think the time itself was ill-chosen, though he did think the news, over which they had no control and which it is impossible to foresee, which came during the week when the tenders were opened was probably not such as to tend to a favourable result in respect of the issue. As regarded the popularity or unpopularity of the method of drawings, he thought opinion in the City and elsewhere was by no means unanimous. It must be borne in mind that the market for Exchequer bonds was at all times a limited one, and that they were not the kind of security that was very widely held or that appealed to a very large public. But he did not think it was adversely affected to anything like the extent which some hon. Gentlemen appeared to suppose. Investors who tendered for these bonds calculated the price so as to yield them 3 percent. on their money. He thought the result of the issue was not unsatisfactory. What was the alternative to the course he had taken? He might simply have renewed the Exchequer bonds in the lump for ten years. Would that have been an altogether satisfactory arrangement ? It was an embarrassment to have this large amount of debt falling in in a single year. It necessitated the accumulation of money which they were unable to use in order to be ready to pay off, on the date when the bonds fell due, the whole amount of these bonds. He thought it was more desirable to pay off these bonds by regular annual stages, which would take a million off the market every year without any disturbance either to the market or to the Exchequer.

The hon. Member for Poplar said there was no precedent for such a transaction as this, at any rate since the time of Pitt, and he described the bonds as "lottery" bonds. He did not think the hon. Gentleman seriously suggested that there was a serious element of speculation or gambling in an issue of this kind, but he was quite wrong about the precedent. The precedent had been adopted in at least three cases in recent years in regard to stocks the interest and capital of which this country had guaranteed—a Turkish loan, an Egyptian loan, and a Greek loan, issued under the guarantee of the Government of Great Britain.

Mr. WHITLEY: Were they issued at a discount?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN replied that he really could not say what the terms of issue were, but he should say that most likely they were issued at a discount. They appeared to him to be exact precedents—at any rate they were precedents for all the purposes of the criticism which the hon. Gentleman the Member for Poplar urged against his proposal. Of course there was a certain amount of novelty about the proposal. As he admitted when making it to the House, he had to consider whether it was on the whole the best proposal, or whether he should have submitted some other suggestion. The hon. Member for Poplar seemed to suggest that if he had made other proposals—that if he had issued Consols—he might have borrowed on very much better terms. He did not know whether the hon. Gentleman seriously thought that.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON pointed out that he did not mention Consols.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said the hon. Member did not mention Consols, but he mentioned the rate of interest payable on the Funded Debt, contrasted that with the rate of interest payable on these bonds, and said therefore the issue of these bonds was an unbusinesslike transaction. If the hon. Gentleman meant anything he meant that an issue of Consols would have been a better course to adopt. If he had made a large issue of Consols, still more, if he had attempted to make a small issue of entirely new stock, he would have depressed the price of Consols, he would have borrowed upon terms certainly not more advantageous than those he had obtained, he would almost certainly have borrowed further below par, and, therefore, there would have been a larger amount to repay on each £100 of actual money secured than there would be under his present proposal. This system of drawings, though not very frequent in our finance, was very well known to the Money Market, which could easily make its calculations when the amount to be drawn every year was a simple division of the total sum, as was the case in the present instance. It calculated the price at which it tendered on the average life of these bonds. This reduced the element of speculation to a minimum, and was not, he thought, open to the accusation, not pressed by the hon. Member for Poplar, but adumbrated by him, that he was really tempting gentlemen in the City to some wild gambling transaction, foreign to their nature, and depraving to the people of this country. He appealed to the House to treat this matter in a businesslike way, and to facilitate the progress of these Resolutions through their present stage. He thought many points they had to discuss would be far more easily discussed when hon. Gentlemen had the Bill in their hands than they could be on the Report of the Resolutions.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.) said he would not comment upon the particular form of the bonds except to point out that when it was desired to raise £10,000,000 this country had to pay at the rate of 3½ per cent. The right hon. Gentleman began his remarks by defending himself and the Government as to the means they had taken under this Resolution for the reduction of the Debt. Looking back on the conduct of the finances during the last twelve years he (Mr. Buchanan) did not regard that branch of finance as one upon which the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Government could pride themselves. They had enjoyed periods of great prosperity, and latterly of exceptional prosperity, but during both periods they had not shown themselves sufficiently alive to the primary obligations of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to look as his first interest to the diminution of the great burden of debt on the State. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol was Chancellor of the Exchequer during a time of great prosperity, and yet was the greatest sinner of the whole lot because he reduced the debt charge by £2,000,000 in order to avoid a deficit. That was one item in the financial career of the Party opposite which least redounded to their financial credit. Then there was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon who was Chancellor of the Exchequer when the war came to an end, but neither that right hon. Gentleman nor his predecessor nor his successor had ever endeavoured to put before the House and the country any general plan for a substantial reduction of the enormous increase of the Debt caused by that war. There was a strong opinion in the country that it would have been well to have allowed a large amount of the increased taxation due to the war to have remained upon the shoulders of the taxpayers if they could have been assured by those administering the finances of the country that it was to be kept upon their shoulders with a view to making within a reasonably short period a substantial diminution in the war debt. But on that general topic there would be a better opportunity on the Second Reading of the finance Bill of taking up the challenge of the right hon. Gentleman.

There was an obvious fallacy in the comparisons made by the right hon. Gentleman in his statement of what he was doing with regard to the reduction of the National Debt. The proportion of dead-weight debt to the total debt of the country was much larger than in former years, and a comparison founded upon the proportion of the dead-weight debt to the total debt was not a comparison with the reduction of the National Debt as a whole. When they desired to make a comparison between themselves and their predecessors of twenty-five or fifty years ago he ventured to think the legitimate form of comparison was to see how much the taxpayer had been prepared to take upon his shoulders as the debt charge from year to year with a view to the reduction of the National Debt as a whole. He had not been quite able to follow the right hon. Gentleman in the comparison he made between what he was doing now under this Resolution and what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon proposed two years ago, because supposing the anticipations of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon had been fulfilled the position would have been a very different one. The right hon. Member for Croydon anticipated that they would get back £30,000,000 from the Transvaal, so that in January, 1906, they would have had £30,000,000 wiped off the National Debt, and have had a debt charge remaining at £20,000,000. So far as the present position was concerned they would have £1,000,000 wiped off the Debt instead of £30,000,000, and would have a debt charge of £28,000,000. Had the anticipations of the right hon. Member for Croydon been fulfilled they would have been in an immeasurably better position than could now be the case. It had not, he thought, been pointed out how small the amount was by which it was proposed to reduce the National Debt. £160,000,000 had been added to the Debt for the cost of the war, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to wipe off £10,000,000 only in ten years. That was all that was proposed to be done with a view to the extinction of this extra debt. The right hon. Gentleman at the end of his observations indulged in the hope or anticipation that, after all, some day we might get this £30,000,000 from the Transvaal, but as time went on that hope became more slender, and he (Mr. Buchanan) did not think anybody now looked upon it as a real asset to be depended on by this country. It was summed up in the words of a proverb well known north of the Tweed: "You canna tak the breeks aff a Hielanman." They could not get money out of the Transvaal, and he would be a foolish person who, administering the finances of this country, ever anticipated getting money from that source.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said the calculations of the Chancellor of the Exchequer were based altogether on the assumption that no obligation lay on this country to redeem the war debt. Those who could remember the discussions which took place at the commencement of the war would remember that the then Chancellor of the Exchequer the right hon. Member for West Bristol declared that this country ought to make provision to clear off altogether any debt incurred for the war in South Africa.

*Sir M. HICKS BEACH (Bristol, W.): That related to the first £10,000,000.

Mr. DILLON said it was then assumed that the war would only cost £10,000,000, but in the discussion which took place upon the raising of that £10,000,000 the right hon. Gentlemen's remarks were not directed to the £10,000,000, but to the debt incurred for the cost of the war. The war turned out to be a very different war to what was anticipated by the right hon. Member for West Bristol. His statements and his convictions were perfectly honest, but they were based on false information just in the same way as were the hopes held out for the twentieth time of obtaining this money from the Transvaal. The principles laid down by the right hon. Member for West Bristol had no application to the £10,000,000 loan, but to the debt due to the war, and it was his conviction that it was the duty of this country to make a special effort to deal with it. That was essential to the credit of this country.

He had listened with amazement to the Chancellor of the Exchequer's justification of the provision he had made for the reduction of the National Debt. After a great war, when an immense deficit had been made for this country, the right hon. Gentleman thought he was justified if he made a provision not to reduce the extra war debt, but a provision one third less than that which had been made in times of peace before the war. It was a new principle and a principle which struck a most deadly blow at the credit of Great Britain. To a large extent the Chancellor of the Exchequer had, he thought, closed his eyes to the opinion in regard to the credit of this country. The present low price of Consols was a sign of the diseased state of public health. It was inflicting loss on every interest in the country and was inflicting a most grievous burden on the constituency he represented. It was inflicting a loss which would amount to millions. The first duty of the State was to raise the price of Consols, and if steps were taken to make a special attempt to redeem the war debt the most proper and effectual way would, in his opinion, be by a purchase of Consols on the market. He was bound to protest against the provision made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the reduction of the Debt, because it was, in his opinion, a most inadequate provision for extinguishing the war debt.

His second criticism was that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had almost ignored the growing operation of the new system of extraordinary budgets for naval and military works. In making comparisons between the proportions existing at the present time and in 1890 between the Sinking Fund and the volume of the Debt, one ought not to leave out of account that new system of special budgets which was unknown until the introduction of Works Bills, and which had been frequently denounced by older and sounder financiers as characteristic of the Budgets of European nations. It had always been contended that to understand the position of European countries so long and elaborate a study of the national finances was necessary that it was practically impossible for any others than experts and persons behind the scenes to know how the country stood, whereas in the case of England, through the action of a long series of great financiers, the accounts had been so simplified that "the man in the street," with no special knowledge of finance, could take up the financial statement and understand exactly the position. During the last fifteen years, however, that had ceased to be the case. As a senior Member of the House, in sitting through financial discussions, he had noticed that the majority of Members were absolutely ignorant as to the financial obligations of the country. At first the Naval and Military Works Acts were for small sums—£3,000,000 or £4,000,000—which, it was said, ought to be spent as capital expenditure, and Members who protested against the beginnings of the system and prophesied that it would expand in an astounding manner were laughed at by the Ministers in charge of the Bills. From that time they had gone on expanding, until now there was in full force the system of extraordinary budgets. Moreover, when the Bills were for small amounts they were introduced early in the session, and ample time was given for their discussion; now, although they increased the debt of the country by £8,000,000 or £9,000,000 a year, they were brought in towards the end of the session when anything like adequate discussion was impossible. He altogether denied that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was setting aside £10,000,000 for the reduction of debt. As far as he could make out, there would be no reduction of debt this year at all, because there was being as much borrowed as paid off. What satisfaction was it to the British taxpayer to introduce the ridiculous expression "capital expenditure?" It was debt all the same, and the charges had to be met. The permanent works carried out under Works Bills were said to be assets of the nation, but that was not so. The only asset which could be set against borrowing was one bringing in revenue, and, so far from doing that, naval and military works were excuses for and causes of further expenditure, as once the works were constructed further expenditure was demanded for guns, garrisons, and other matters. Under the present system the Sinking Fund was illusory. There was really no Sinking Fund; the debt of the nation was practically not decreasing at all.

With regard to the Transvaal contribution towards the cost of the war, it would be interesting to know whether the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol still believed we should get the £30,000,000. Two or three years ago the right hon. Gentleman expressed in very strong terms his determination to see that £30,000,000 paid. But if it was just to impose the £30,000,000 then why was not security taken for its payment? Personally, he had always expressed his belief that it was unjust to impose the contribution, and that none of it would be obtained, and many Members were now beginning to see that he was a truer prophet than they had thought. He saw little prospect of the money being paid, and as years went on he believed the chances of payment would still further diminish. Would it not be more honest, and wiser from the point of view of Imperial policy, for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to draw his pen across this £30,000,000, and not leave it to be a bone of contention in the future. Possibly hon. Members had read General Botha's opinion in that morning's *Times*. Already the £30,000,000 was becoming a great national issue in the Transvaal, and to say that there would be any more probability of getting the money from the new Council was preposterous. He rejoiced to hear the statement of the

Chancellor of the Exchequer that it would have been wrong and impolitic to impose this contribution on the Transvaal by the nominated Council and the authority of this House. That was the view he himself held four years ago, and he believed the statement of the right hon. Gentleman would create a profound impression in the Transvaal. If it was wrong and impolitic to impose the contribution by a nominated Council, how could the right hon. Gentleman defend its imposition by a semi-nominated Council and a Government not resposible to the people? Could not the House see that they were giving General Botha and his friends a most popular cry and a great platform on which to demand real self-government for the Transvaal? They would naturally demand that the matter should be left to the free voice of the people, and it was well known what that voice would be. He regarded that £30,000,000 as gone. Those who looked forward to a peaceful and contented South Africa would do well to drop the question before they were forced to do so by a popular agitation, and he suggested it would be more honest for the Chancellor of the Exchequer now, and in the future, when providing for the payment of debt to make no further allusion to a contribution from the Transvaal.

Sir ROBERT REID said it was obvious that the financial arrangements of the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been disturbed by the non-payment of the £30,000,000 by the Transvaal. It was unnecessary to enter into details, but the matter having been left to the new Council, four-fifths of which would be elected, it was impossible to understand how any human being could imagine that the people of the Transvaal could be so generous as to vote £30,000,000 for this country. Would it not be more straightforward for everyone to admit that it was hopeless to expect to get any part of that £30,000,000 for the relief of the Debt of this country? If the money could be obtained from those who made the war it would be a different story; nothing would give him more profound satisfaction, but that was out of the question. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer said he had been led by the statements of Lord Milner to anticipate the payment of the first £10,000,000 last year.

*Mr. RITCHIE: What I said was that in addition to the representations made to my Department, I most carefully studied all the despatches from Lord Milner, and I came to the conclusion that, according to his reports, the Transvaal would be in a position to pay the whole £30,000,000 at the times stated.

Sir ROBERT REID asked whether the right hon. Gentleman followed up that series of reports by reading the Blue-books containing the falsification of almost every prediction of Lord Milner. All the predictions which had been made in regard to the war had proved 40 or 50 per cent. out. He presumed that Lord Milner was advised by some of the officials around him, but there never had been anything more remarkable than the entire falsification of the predictions contained in the dispatches of Lord Milner in 1903.

Since the year 1899 the direct debt of all kinds in this country had increased from £635,000,000 to £796,000,000. That was the first effect, but the second was that they were now paying off far less debt than before. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had displayed great skill in handling figures, but the broad point to be considered was how much richer on capital account was the country at the end of the year 1899 than it was at the beginning; and how much richer would it be at the end of this year on capital account to what it was at the beginning. How much of the total debt had been paid off and not renewed? They wanted to know the net diminution. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had taken the year 1898–9 to compare with this year. He believed in that year they paid off £7,000,000 of net liabilities, and that was the net diminution on capital account. At the end of this year they would not diminish their net liabilities by more than £1,900,000. It should not be forgotten that they had a much greater Debt in consequence of the war, and yet they were paying it off at an absurdly low rate. That was the real reason why Consols were down, and that was the cause of the present position of British credit. One thing had always struck him, and that was that the real point was nearly always forgotten or else not mentioned. A late Chancellor of the Exchequer anticipated that £10,000,000 would be the cost of the war in South Africa, but it ended in costing £230,000,000. It was the same story in regard to Somaliland and Tibet; therefore he thought they ought to be a little less credulous in regard to the information given to them. Until they were really prepared, without regard to influences of any sort or kind, to deal with the expenditure upon the Army and Navy, and until they had the courage to deal with both, it was no use asking the Chancellor of the Exchequer to make more provision for paying off debt. The real remedy lay in the House of Commons taking a closer interest and devoting its earnest attention to finance. Why had they not got the Committee, which was recommended by the House some time ago, to examine all the items of expenditure, with power to call witnesses, in order to keep some check upon this extravagance, which would lower the credit of this country unless it was stopped?

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport) said they had just heard the important statement made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that, in his judgment, it would be quite improper to exact this war contribution from the Transvaal. He thought it would help them considerably in this matter if they could have the views of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol on this question, because the House of Commons sooner or later would have to either enforce or abandon this war contribution of £30,000,000. The statement made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer was a most momentous one.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I have not added anything to what I said in my Budget statement when I spoke of the impossibility of exacting this contribution by our authority in a nominated Assembly, which is absolutely moribund and foreign to the people, at a moment when a new representative Council is being formed. If I said anything to convey the impression which my words have had on the hon. Member then it was quite inadvertent.

MR. KEARLEY said that he understood what the right hon. Gentleman meant was that at this particular juncture it would not be wise to make any special effort to get the money for this war contribution. That did not dispose of the fact that the £30,000,000 was still in question. There was a growing impression that we were not going to get that £30,000,000, and it was no good playing hide-and-seek in the matter. If they did not anticipate obtaining it, it would be far better to own up to it. He did not think there was a strong disposition in this country to endeavour to get that money. He hoped that before the debate closed the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol would intervene, for his intervention at this moment would be most opportune.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I am not disposed to respond to the invitation of the hon. Member opposite, because I do not think that this is a proper time to discuss this question. I must say, however, that it does seem to me rather strange that hon. Members opposite should devote themselves to finding fault with the Chancellor of the Exchequer because, in their opinion, he makes no sufficient provision for the reduction of our Debt, and then, almost in the same breath, should do their best to persuade the Transvaal that we do not expect to get this £30,000,000. I think the less said upon this matter at this moment the better. I have never expressed to the House or the country, any more than I think my successors have done, any opinion that a war contribution could be exacted from the Transvaal unless it could be paid out of the mining wealth of the Transvaal. The moment has not come when the mines of the Transvaal are in a position to pay that war contribution. When that moment does come, as we have some reason to anticipate it must come before very long, then a very considerable revenue from mining rights will be received by the Transvaal Government. Then I say, as I have said before, that in my opinion this debt ought to be paid, and I hope nothing will be said in this House, either by the Government or by hon. Members opposite, which will convey to the Transvaal the idea that the people of this country have not a right to ask for this war contribution.

*Mr. JOHN WILSON (Falkirk Burghs) said they had from the mouth of the mining magnates themselves the most emphatic testimony that the Transvaal would be perfectly able to pay the £30,000,000 if British rule were established in the Transvaal. Mr. Henry Hays Hammond, the eminent mining engineer, who was the greatest authority on this subject, had calculated that the substitution of British rule for the rule of President Kruger, the abolition of the dynamite monopoly, and the free importation of labour would mean a saving to the mineowners of £4,800,000 per annum, a sum sufficient to pay both the interest and the principal on £100,000,000, which was the sum he had always maintained the Transvaal ought to pay. On behalf of hon. Members on his side of the House he protested against anything being said which would militate against the chances of this country getting the £30,000,000 repaid. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, when Chancellor of the Exchequer, stated most emphatically in the House that the Transvaal would be able to pay the £30,000,000 from the mining profits. It was a mistake for the Government not to have insisted on payment in connection with the granting of the new Constitution.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 191; Noes, 102. (Division List No. 147.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, Lt.-Col H. F (Middlesex)
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brymer, William Ernest
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A (Glasgow)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Worc.
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R B (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, Maj Evans (T'r H'mlets
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-
Gorst Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Gretton, John
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nd'rry
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Heath, Sir James (Staffords NW
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F (Sheffield, Brightside
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, John (Yorks. N. R.)
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col. W.
Kerr, John
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Hn. H. L. W (Mile End)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. NR
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants, Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt Hn Walter (Bristol, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W.
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Marks, Harry Hananel
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriesshire
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, John Throgmorton
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hon. J Scott (Hants.)
Morrell, George Herbert

Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Percy Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Ridley, S. Forde
Ritchie, Rt. Hon Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir Harry S(Limehouse
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart. Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn J. G (Oxf'd Univ.
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tuffnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Turnour, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E H (Sheffield)
Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir William H
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E (Taunton
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R., (Bath
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.

Tellers for the Ayes—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Barlow, John Emmott
Black, Alexander William
Brand, Hon. Arthur G.
Brigg, John
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Cremer, William Randal
Dalziel, James Henry
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Edwards, Frank
Emmott, Alfred
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Findlay, Alexander (Lanark, NE
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Grant, Corrie
Grey. Rt. Hon. Sir E. (Berwick)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Harcourt, Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Harwood, George
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Jones, Leif S. (Appleby)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Lambert, George
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Moss, Samuel
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary, Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
Parrott, William
Partington, Oswald
Philipps, John Wynford
Price, Robert John
Reckitt, Harold James
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th
Rickett, J. Compton
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R. (Northants
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wallace, Robert
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wills, Arthur Walters (N. Dorset
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Noes—Mr. J. H. Whitley and Mr. John Wilson (Falkirk).

WAYS AND MEANS [10th April] REPORT.

Order read, for further consideration of Second, Third, and Fourth Resolutions.

Resolutions again read.

CONTINUANCE OF ADDITIONAL CUSTOMS DUTIES ON TOBACCO, BEER, AND SPIRITS.

2. "That the additional Customs duties on tobacco, beer, and spirits imposed by sections two, three, four, and five of The Finance Act, 1900 (including any increased duties imposed by section five of

that Act), shall continue to be charged until the first day of July, nineteen hundred and six."

CONTINUANCE OF ADDITIONAL EXCISE DUTIES ON BEER AND SPIRITS.

3. "That the additional Excise duties on beer and spirits imposed by sections six and seven of The Finance Act, 1900, shall continue to be charged until the first day of July, nineteen hundred and six."

AMENDMENT OF LAW.

4. "That it is expedient to amend the law relating to the National Debt, Customs, and Inland Revenue."

Resolutions agreed to.

WAYS AND MEANS [11TH APRIL].

Resolution reported.

TEA.

"That there shall be charged on and after the first day of July, nineteen hundred and five, until the first day of July, nineteen hundred and six, the following Customs Import duty on Tea (that is to say), Tea, the pound, Sixpence."

Resolution agreed to.

WAYS AND MEANS [12TH APRIL].

Resolution reported.

INCOME TAX.

"That Income Tax shall be charged for the year beginning the sixth day of April, nineteen hundred and five, at the rate of one shilling in the pound."

Resolution agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by the Chairman of Ways and Means, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Victor Cavendish.

FINANCE BILL.

"To grant certain duties of Customs and Inland Revenue, to alter other duties, and to amend the Law relating to Customs and Inland Revenue and the National Debt, and to make other provisions for the financial arrangements of the year," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 198.]

POST OFFICE (TELEPHONE AGREEMENT).

Motion made, and Question proposed—"That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the Agreement of the 2nd day of February, 1905, between the Postmaster-General and the National Telephone Company, and to report whether it is desirable in the public interest that the Agreement should become binding."—(*Lord Stanley.*)

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said that he understood an arrangement had been come to that anything outside the Orders of the Day was not to be taken at the present time. There were objections to the constitution of the Committee. There was no immediate hurry for the appointment of the Committee.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton) said he had not the slightest intention of breaking any bargain, and if it was considered that the appointment of this Committee did break an arrangement he should not proceed with it. But, he could not help hoping that the House might consider that this was not a contentious matter and would allow the Committee to be set up.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil) said he was glad to see that an agreement had been come to with the National Telephone Company. The constitution of this Committee had been opposed by some hon. Members for a particular and special reason. It had been pointed out that there were 13,000 employees of the Telephone Company whose interests would be affected by the transfer of the business to the Post Office, and that, in common fairness, there should be one Labour Member on the Committee, who should be specially charged to attend to those interests. The ordinary channels of communication had been used to make this fact known. The position was that the noble Lord himself had no objection to two new Members being added to the Committee, one of whom should be a Labour Member; and the Whips on both sides had no objection to that. But, for some reason or another, this addition had not met with favour in some quarter. Could the noble Lord explain to the House why, on a matter on which there was a general agreement, the understanding come to both by the noble Lord and the Whips had not been given effect to? What was the explanation? If the noble Lord could agree to the addition to the Committee of the names suggested all opposition to the appointment of the Committee would be at an end. If his information was correct, the agreement with the National Telephone Company would come into operation automatically early in August whether this Committee was appointed or not; and he thought that, therefore, the Committee should be appointed as early as possible. At the same time, he would rather that no Committee should be appointed unless there was a Labour Member on it. He and his friends felt that in the interests of the employees there should be a Labour Member on the Committee. The Labour Party was fully organised, with Whips of their own, just like the Irish Party, and they should have a representative on every Committee appointed by the House. On those two grounds he hoped the noble Lord would concede the point, and so do away with any feeling on those benches.

Lord STANLEY said there was one thing he could not accept from the hon. Member, and that was that this Committee, as constituted, was not perfectly willing and able to look after the interests of the employees. He thought, also, that the hon. Member was under a misunderstanding in saying that there was an agreement as to the inclusion of a Labour Member. The hon. Member came to him on the day the House rose for the Easter recess, and told him that the Whips had agreed together that there should be such a representative.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE: I did not say "together."

Lord STANLEY said he was afraid the hon. Member was rather under a misapprehension. The Committee was formed in the usual way. Those on his side of the House were put on by the Chief Whip, and those on the other side of the House were put on by the hon. Member for West Leeds. He could not possibly alter any of those put on without first consulting with the hon. Member for West Leeds; and therefore he could not agree to the hon. Member's proposal. But at the same time, if the House would allow the reference to go, he would not press the names until he had had an opportunity of consulting the hon. Member for West Leeds.

Mr. KEARLEY (Devonport) pointed out that many Members interested in that question were not in the House at that moment, and in view of the fact that there was an arrangement that no contentious business would be taken after the Orders had been gone through he wished to be assured that there was a thorough agreement on the part of hon. Gentlemen opposite.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said there was a special reason why there should be representatives of the Labour Party on this particular Committee. On behalf of the Irish Party he strongly supported the claim that fair play should be given to the men.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Lord Stanley*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

And, there being no further Business set down for the Afternoon Sitting, Mr. Deputy-Speaker left the Chair until the Evening Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

ADJOURNMENT (UNDER STANDING ORDER NO. 10.)

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said he had always felt that a Motion for the adjournment of the House was a very serious matter. It was a weapon provided by the wisdom of Parliament for the protection of minorities and for dealing with cases of urgency, and it ought to be used with a great deal of moderation and with a sense of special responsibility. It was in that light that he had asked leave to move this Motion, because he desired to bring before Parliament a matter eminently suited for the use of that great Parliamentary weapon. The question raised very large and important issues; it was essentially an Irish question, but at the same time there were involved national and Imperial interests. It related to the use of the forces of the Crown, and above all to the naval forces of the Crown, and he drew a distinction between the naval and military forces, for reasons which appealed more strongly to Englishmen even than to Irishmen, for he did not know there was any question which would more vehemently appeal to the feelings of Englishmen than one alleging the improper use of the naval forces of the Crown. There was also associated with this question the relationship of the people of England towards the people of Ireland. This might appear a somewhat swelling prelude to the very modest proportions of the particular question he had to ask them to discuss.

His Motion dealt with the case of one man and with the case of an island three miles long and two miles broad. The debt involved was one of £40 only, and the peasant in question was the owner of four cows. That seemed a grotesquely small matter on which to arraign the conduct of the Executive of Ireland. The island of Dursey, of which he dared say the Chief Secretary had heard for the first time that day, which he had never seen, and of which he no doubt knew little or nothing, was the battle-ground of the question he was about to deal with. It was, as he had said, three miles long and two miles broad; it was one of the most isolated spots in the United Kingdom; it was only separated at one point by a quarter of a mile from the mainland, and yet that quarter of a mile was almost as impassable a barrier as between Dursey and Cork as the Atlantic Ocean was between Cork and America. This quarter of a mile was a small sound, and because of its narrowness and the peculiar position of the island generally, it was remarkable for being extremely tempestuous and difficult to cross. As a matter of fact, short as the distance was, it was enough to make communication between the island and the mainland very infrequent, very perilous, and sometimes impossible.

There was no public-house on the island, a fact which gave legitimate satisfaction to the hon. Member for South Tyrone; there was no post office, but there was a postal service once a week; there was no minister of any denomination whatsoever, neither priest nor minister of the Established Church; he believed there was no school-house, and not a single policeman or police barrack on the island, except in cases of emergency. When he came to the economical condition of the island, he found himself in the presence of a strange collection of facts. The island consisted largely of rock. There was not a single rood of land cultivated upon it that had not been laboriously won from rocky stone. There were practically no roads on the island, there was not a farmer's cart, and the methods of cultivation were such as would be considered out of date even in Arabia. It was almost like a page of Oriental history. The loads had to be carried on the backs of donkeys or mules, or in baskets on either side of the animal, and when the people had to convey their cows to the fairs or markets on the adjoining mainland they did not employ cattle vessels or boats, but the animals had to swim across.

There were twenty-five families on this island, and most of the tenants were non-judicial tenants, just as if the storm of agitation and reform which had swept over the country during the last twenty-five years had never occurred. The tenants had not even gone into the Land Courts to get a reduction of their rents, and, in fact, they were rack-rented tenants at will. The island was part of the estate of a gentleman named White. It would seem that a landlord who inherited such an estate should regard it as his chief duty in life, not to collect rents from the people, but to help to save them from starvation. He would like to know if there were any Englishman who, having an estate of that kind, would venture to ask rents, much less rack rents, from the tenants. He understood that the landlord of this property had a large house in the county of Cork, some distance away from the island, but that he did not dwell very often there, and was, to all intents and purposes, an absentee landlord—one of that large class of men without nationality and without a sense of duty, who had been the ruin of Ireland to a large extent, and who had been the secret weakness of England in dealing with Irish questions. The tenants were quiet, industrious, but oppressed people. They were called farmers, but they were not farmers in the real sense of the term — they were not even cottiers. They belonged to that hybrid population which, in certain parts of Ireland, had slum houses on slum pieces of land, and whose real method of gaining a livelihood was by working away from home, some of them coming to England every year to reap the harvest, and returning with the money they had earned to pay rack rents for the miserable cabin in which a beneficent law and a beneficent landlord allowed them to live. But these people of Dursey were not even migratory labourers. Their island was too inaccessible for that. What they really lived on was fishing, and if he wanted to appeal to the emotions of that House, and to the feeling of humanity which he believed pervaded it, he would ask them to have some sympathy for this little cluster of islanders who earned every penny with which they purchased tea and bread for the maintenance of their children at the risk of their lives on one of the most tempestuous parts of the coast.

These fishermen were blessed, or rather cursed, with the possession of small patches of land and small cabins which a beneficent landlord, protected by the mighty power of a great Empire, let to them at excessive rents. When the late Chief Secretary for Ireland introduced his Land Bill for the purpose of relieving men of this class their hopes ran very high indeed. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover, in the course of the debates on that Bill, painted many glowing and eloquent pictures of the new life that would result from the transfer of the soil from the landlord to the occupier, and there was no picture he painted more eloquently and more frequently than the change which would be effected in the slum holdings of Ireland. He said he was anxious to pass the Bill for the benefit of the general tenants of Ireland, for the good of the country, and for the honour and credit of the Empire, but, abov all, he was anxious to pass it in order to bring relief to the submerged tenth of the Irish congested districts. Did anyone suppose that the Nationalist Members would have consented to many of the provisions of the Bill, especially the zone provision, which had so grossly exaggerated and enhanced the price of the landlords' property, had it not been for the glowing pictures which the right hon. Gentleman sincerely presented to them of the relief which would be afforded to the tenants. The people were entitled to believe that this great Act of Parliament, with all the resources of the richest of Empires behind it, was passed specially to deal with such cases, and the result was that when the Act was passed they immediately began to agitate for the purchase of their holdings. Had the Bill been the right kind of Bill they would not have required to agitate, because any man who knew the real facts of the situation in Ireland would have seen the necessity of compelling the landlords to sell their land to the tenants. Negotiations were commenced for the sale of the holdings on this island, but they broke down because the landlord demanded what he was pleased to call his "net income" from the island. He did not know what "net income" meant in that particular case. But those who were engaged in trade in arriving at their net incomes always made an allowance for bad debts. This island was a bad debt. What else could it be? There was a rack rent charged for a few miserable patches of land saved from the rock and paid for by the adventurous skiffs which went out fishing in the most tempestuous part of the Channel. At any rate he would say that the net income was represented by a very small sum, far less than that demanded by the landlord.

As he had said, the negotiations broke down in consequence of the attitude taken up by the landlord. But there were other resources left. The present Prime Minister had often been eulogised very highly for passing the Congested Districts Board Bill, and it was a noteworthy fact that it was the habit of British statesmen to claim credit for the results of agitation which had been carried on by the Nationalist Members for many years. He would like the House to bear in mind the definition of a congested district embodied in the 36th Section of the Land Purchase (Ireland) Act, 1891, and he ventured to suggest that the island of Dursey certainly came within that definition, by reason of the fact that the rateable value fell below 30s. per head of population. The Congested Districts Board at any rate considered that the case was eminently one demanding their attention, and they approached the landlord of the property. Now he founded the statements which he was about to lay before the House upon what had appeared in the Unionist Press—a very risky thing to do perhaps, as was suggested by the hon. Member for South Tyrone. But he thought he was justified in saying it was a prudent and legitimate thing to do in this case. The London *Times* of April 29th published from their Cork correspondent an account of an interview with Mr. Turner, one of the agents for the estate, and in that interview Mr. Turner stated that it was his intention to remain on the island for a week or ten days, so as to settle with the other tenants. He wanted to draw the attention of the House to the fact that the offer made by the Congested Districts Board for the purchase of the island was so exceedingly low that the landlord could not accept it, and he wished to ask the Chief Secretary, as President of the Congested Districts Board, who, in his short intervals between receiving Orange addresses and other more auspicious occasions, had stated his desire to deal with the problem of congestion in Ireland, what he had to say with regard to the negotiations affecting the island of Dursey. This was the kind of language in which the Chief Secretary addressed the Catholics—

> "Monsignor Hewson and gentlemen, there have been two distinct questions introduced here this evening, one which all must realise who have travelled your country as I have to-day, and that is the isolation of your town from the outer world. That isolation is indeed complete, and must therefore bring in its train serious difficulties to the people who live here. Coming here, as I have to-day, I can see there are difficulties which might be overcome. The race for life is severer than ever, and in your case it is rendered more so when there is no mode of communication with the outside world save by telegraph. I had the good fortune to be accompanied by Sir Henry Robinson to-day, who, as no doubt you know, has at heart the welfare of Ireland, being connected as he is with several important Government Departments. He called my attention to your isolation, and suggested modes by which it might be remedied. I will not promise anything definitely, but one thing I will promise, and no doubt promises have been made before, and when they are not fulfilled there is left a bitter impression behind them. I am impressed with the urgency of this case, and promise I shall give it my personal and immediate attention, as I am actuated by a sincere desire to help you out of the difficulties under which you labour."

The Congested Districts Board naturally turned to this island, and he wanted to know from the Chief Secretary, the head of that Board, what was the attitude of the Board in regard to the island. He assumed that the right hon. Gentleman would not abandon the policy of his predecessor, at least in regard to this matter. If the Congested Districts Board approached the landlord of the island with the view to purchase it must have been with the sanction, if not on the initiative, of the late Chief Secretary for Ireland, and the price offered must have been a fair one. He defied the most extreme supporter of the landlord Party in the House to say that the Congested Districts Board offered the landlord a single penny less for the land than he was entitled to receive. [An HON. MEMBER: What about the State?] The State was a secondary consideration. The safety of the landlord would appeal much more to the late Chief Secretary than the safety of the State. The fact that the Congested Districts Board offered the landlord a fair price placed the Government in a somewhat difficult position. The problem of the congested districts was one that had appealed to all sections of the House. He had heard the hon. Member for North Armagh speak as warmly in favour of dealing with these districts as the late Chief Secretary. The House of Commons and the House of Lords when the Land Act was passed agreed to give credit to the extent of £100,000,000 in order primarily to deal with this problem. When the problem presented itself in the case of this small island the landlord, as appeared to be conclusively proved, refused to accept the fair price which was offered. What did that mean? That meant that against the will and intention of Parliament, against the action of the chief governor of Ireland, for the Chief Secretary was the head of the Congested Districts Board, the landlord stood upon a demand not for a just but for an exorbitant price for his land. The landlord, failing to get the rack rent from the tenants or a fraudulent price from the State, went to the Law Courts and endeavoured to get from them the execution of the letter of the law. Shylock was defeated by Portia, and this landlord was defeated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover. He understood that the landlord or his agents applied to the right hon. Gentleman for the help of the forces of the Crown in order to exact the rack rents, and to prevent the estate from being sold at the just price which was offered by the Congested Districts Board. He made that statement on the authority of the parish priest of the district. The landlord met with a blank refusal, or at least with something clothed in the eloquent euphemisms of the late Chief Secretary which amounted to a blank refusal, and the tenants were not persecuted either by the soldiers or the police. Then came the change in the Chief Secretaryship, and the aids to his oppression which the landlord had sought in vain from Dublin Castle under the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover he was successful in obtaining from the Chief Secretary. The right hon. Gentleman opposite shook his head. He assured the right hon. Gentleman that he did not wish to press the case one bit too much against him personally. He was sure that if the right hon. Gentleman's knowledge of Ireland was as great as his intentions were good he might then be better able than now to do something for the country, but he was the slave of his environment, and especially of the obscurantist landlord faction which had obtained supremacy. Whatever might be the secret history of the transaction, the fact remained that the force which was not brought against the islanders in the days of the late Chief Secretary had been brought against them under the present occupant of the office.

What happened? He ought to say, in fairness to the House, that he was not going to tell a tale of Russia, though, if he were to omit names, the House might be deceived into thinking that he was telling the story of a scene in Warsaw. He would tell the House frankly and without concealment that he was speaking of a portion of the British dominions and that the Government he was arraigning was not the Government of the Czar but the Government of the present Chief Secretary for Ireland. Decrees were issued against the people of the island, and it was found somewhat difficult to carry out the evictions. On a day in April an astonishing spectacle was seen. There were off the coast two ships of the British Navy, conveying over 200 police. At four o'clock in the afternoon the operations began. The police were marched into the town, and they immediately commenced preparations for what apparently was to be a great campaign. They were supplied with tents, meat, potatoes, and cabbage, and several barrels of porter. How the poor shoeless, hungry, thirsty soldiers of Russia, fighting in Manchuria, if they read this account, would envy the men who were to take part in this great invasion of the island of Dursey. The campaign, so successfully organised, proceeded with the same skilful tactics and successful strategy. They effected a landing. It was the first time in history the British Fleet had made a successful landing on the island of Dursey. Other explorers had tried, many admirals had risked their reputations in the great enterprise, but the fact that this was the first time a landing had been made would always mark the present Chief Secretary's administration. Lest the House should be carried away by the idea that the Fleet showed anything like reckless daring, he felt bound at once to make the humiliating confession that they resorted to strategy. There were two landings on the island. Thirty policemen were landed at the place where the inhabitants were not expecting the first attack to be made, and then the British Fleet went round to the other landing and put ashore 200 other policemen. The result was that the islanders found themselves between two fires. He would give particulars of what happened according to a Unionist London journal—

"As the boatloads of police approached they were met by a fusillade of stones and rocks from the human batteries on shore. Then Inspector Armstrong's covering party attacked the islanders from behind."

His hon. friends must not be surprised at Inspector Armstrong's covering party attacking the islanders from behind. It was not want of courage—

> "They shoved, buffeted, and jostled the defenders, anxious at first to hurt as few as possible. Very quickly the fight became vicious. The parties fell on one another, and the wildest excitement followed. The men in the boats shouted and blew their whistles, and it seemed as if their comrades would have a bad time before they could land. The men fought the police on shore with their fists, while the women and children kept up a running fire of stones on the men in the boats. The police fought at first with their batons, and laid about them vigorously. Some of them fixed bayonets and used them, while others used the butt ends of their rifles. One man jumped into the sea and swam along the shore to escape the batons of the police. Another attempted to grapple with a policeman, and received a terrific blow from a baton on the temple. After this his assailant lunged about him with his bayonet, and the half-stunned man, in attempting to ward off a thrust with his bare hand, received a terrible gash."

If that were a scene in St. Petersburg, if that were "Vladimir Sunday," and not "Long Sunday," how many homilies there would have been in the British Press in regard to Russian tyranny!

> "At last sheer weight of numbers told. The islanders were overcome, and they were allowed to disperse, with aching heads and limbs. Then the rest of the force was landed, and the all-conquering 200, having vanquished the islanders, advanced to evict Daniel Healy."

Daniel Healy had nominally a large farm—about forty or fifty acres of land.

The hon. Member paused on account of conversation on the Ministerial side of the House, and, resuming his speech, said he could understand that the hon. Gentleman who was sitting close to the hon. Member who interrupted should be afflicted with unexploded speech.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Member —[Cries of "Order."]

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: If the hon. Member for Scotland Division does not give way the hon. Member is not entitled to interrupt.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT: On a point of order——

Mr. T. P. O'Connor.

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Does the hon. Member rise to a point of order?

Mr. T. L. CORBETT: I do, Sir. I was accused of interrupting the hon. Member. I had not interrupted him by a single word or sound. Everybody knows this to be a mere farce.

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I have not heard the hon. Member interrupting. I do not think the last expression ought to be used.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said he could not congratulate the hon. Gentleman on his strategy. He came now to the case of Daniel Healy. This Daniel Healy had the large fortune of four cows and a farm the extent of which was forty or fifty acres and its valuation £12 per annum. It could be easily understood what splendid land that was! It used to be rented at £13, but a previous agent reduced it to £9 15s. Daniel Healy owed four years rent, or £39 in all, and that was the argument for this great expedition. And what did this great expedition find when they got to Daniel Healy's cabin? They found an old man and an old woman, their daughter and daughter-in-law, a sickly child of three years of age, and a baby in a cradle. Again he would quote from a Unionist Journal—

> "The actual eviction was a pitiful affair, unrelieved by a touch of colour. Healy is an old man living with his wife, his son and daughter-in-law and their two children. The wretched cabin is the only home they have ever known, and they clung to the place with its oozy walls and swimming floor with the inherent devotion of the Celt for his home. The 200 police halted outside the house. The agents of the landlord were the first to enter. Healy approached them and pleaded for a settlement. His proposition was flouted. "The law must take its course," said the agent. "Clear out everything!" Then the sheriff's men started to remove the furniture. To add to the pathos of the scene, a steady downpour of rain had set in. The young mother gathered her infant from the cradle, while a kindly neighbour took charge of the other child—an ailing mite of three, who had been ill for some time. The melancholy party dragged out of the house crying bitterly, while one by one their few goods were thrown after them and scattered in the rain round about the house. Then the police, having accomplished their work, departed. They left a force of thirty men in charge of the island."

Now, if he were able to bring before any audience of Englishmen, whatever their political opinions and prejudices might be, these facts, and described the blue-jackets and the ships of the Navy employed in such work, he thought there would be a cry of surprise and indignation. That was the story of the invasion of the island of Dursey.

What was the defence that the Government had to make? The Chief Secretary adumbrated that defence in his Answer to a Question put to him that day. The right hon. Gentleman said that the ship was placed at the disposal of the sheriff by the Admiralty as they were bound in law to do. Now, he entirely traversed that statement. He would not go into the question of how far the Government of Ireland was governed by law when it suited their purpose to break it. In Ireland there was the same system of juries as in England, but that did not prevent the Attorney-General from packing juries. The other day there was an execution in Cork and the coroner, who represented one of the most ancient institutions in the kingdom, sent for the man who had executed the criminal; but the police refused to execute the warrant. Then there was the case when the hon. Member for Cork was arrested and taken away out of Court before the warrant was even made out. What he insisted on was that the Executive of Ireland, in times past, had always held the right, acting within the law, in disputes between landlord and tenant, to tip the balance in favour of the oppressed tenant as against the landlord. He did not expect the Chief Secretary to be entirely acquainted with these facts, even in spite of the rapidity with which he had learned the methods of Irish government; but he did expect him to be acquainted with some Irish history. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman had ever heard of Thomas Drummond. He was a Scotchman, and in the days of the tithe war, when all the forces of the Crown were behind the landlords, Thomas Drummond frequently refused to give the assistance of the police to collect the tithes. Drummond often conferred with O'Connell on the subject in those days; but the Ascendency Press in Ireland were very much exercised when Sir Anthony MacDonnell went down to confer with an Irish priest for the purpose of restoring peace in a disturbed region. Thomas Drummond, he dared say, was beyond the historical knowledge of the Chief Secretary. He would come to modern times. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, when he was Chief Secretary for Ireland, was face to face with a very bad case, but not so bad as the case of Dursey; and he was asked by Lord Clanricarde to be firm in the government of Ireland. What did the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol do? He wrote to Lord Clanricarde—

> "I stated to Mr. Joyce, as I have to many others, my strong objection to anything like wholesale evictions, and my opinion that where it became necessary to proceed to eviction in order to obtain the rights of property, the proper way was to select a few leading cases in which the tenants were able, but declined, to pay, some person being, of course, present at the eviction with full authority from the landlord to accept a settlement at the last moment, if such should be proposed. I then questioned him as to the ability of your Lordship's tenants to pay their rents. He replied that some could do so, but on pressure from me he admitted that he had advised you to make considerable reductions to others. I requested him to inform your Lordship that if you adhered to that decision against the advice of your own agent, and contrary to the general action of the Irish landlords, the responsibility would be solely yours; that you might find such procedure costly and ineffective, and that in the event of application to the Government for the services of constabulary and military on such occasions, compliance with the request would certainly be retarded by the pressure of other claims and duties, and would most probably be postponed to the utmost extent permitted by the law."

He paused for a moment just to say that in the case of Dursey it was evident that what the landlord wanted was not a fair rent or a fair price for the land, but to force on his tenants exorbitant rents. He would now go on to the remarkable evidence of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, which he advised the present Chief Secretary to keep on his chimneypiece and read daily, as to the principles which should guide the Government in Ireland in deciding when and how far the forces of the Crown should be used in evictions. Speaking of Irish landlords in 1886 the right hon. the Member for West Bristol said—

> "I am quite sure that there is no greater foe to the rights of property than the man who tries harshly to exact his rights and fails to perform his duties."

Again asked on January 8th, 1887—

> "Do you think a landlord takes a proper interest in his tenants who evicts them for refusing to pay exorbitant rents?"

His answer—

> "I would not do it myself, and I do not think that a landlord does his duty who would do that. The Government has used all the pressure they could upon landlords within the law."

And the right hon. Gentleman expressed satisfaction that County Court Judges had put a stay on evictions in certain cases where the tenants could not pay. Had the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol been Chief Secretary, the landlord in this Dursey case would not have been able to use the forces of the Empire to evict the tenant for non-payment of an exorbitant rent. Why did the Chief Secretary not follow his eminent predecessor's example, and delay to the last moment the employment of the forces of the Crown?

There was an English point of view. This invasion of the island of Dursey would cost a considerable amount of money. To inforce a debt of about £39 not less than £700 had been expended. Who was going to pay this? Would it not eventually be the taxpayers of England? He would like to know who sanctioned the employment of the ships of the nation for this purpose. Were they to understand that the landlords and police of Ireland were so omnipotent that they were able to employ the ships of the State without consulting the Admiralty? People here were constantly complaining of what was called the want of loyalty in Ireland, and the feeling which Irishmen had towards England. They said that it was somewhat unnatural and irrational. He would like to know what would be the feeling of an Englishman if he were put in the place of the poor Dursey islander? What did that man know of the liberties and rights of the English nation? All he knew was the bayonets and butt-ends of rifles, and the guns and gunboats sent to drive him out of his home because he did not pay a rent which he could not pay. What loyalty could they expect from such men treated as they were? He would despise an Irishman who was loyal to a nation responsible for such iniquity. This was the kind of proceeding with which the present Chief Secretary had inaugurated his rule in Ireland. He charged him, and the class and the policy he represented, not only with gross injustice to these poor people, but with widening and deepening the chasm of misunderstanding and hostility between the people of Ireland and England.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.) said the duty devolved on him to second the Motion which had just been proposed by the hon. Member with his usual power and graphic ability. He ventured to think that the plain and unvarnished facts showed that this Dursey eviction was one of the most shameful ever brought to the notice of the House. He could not believe this expedition was undertaken merely for the purpose of collecting those rents or evicting those tenants. Some other motive was at the bottom of it. It could not be a coincidence that it took place so soon after the visit of the Chief Secretary to Lord Londonderry. He would like to know whether this plot was hatched at Mount Stewart, and he would also like to know what Lord Ardilaun, who, he believed, was one of the trustees of the estate, had to say to it. In his judgment he considered that the whole of this transaction was a deliberate attempt to drive the people to desperation and to provoke retaliation. The whole island, if given rent free, could not provide for the subsistence of one family. If rent was to be paid at all it must be drawn from the sea. Under such circumstances an eviction was a scandal. But, as his hon. friend had lucidly explained, the most serious part of this matter was the part the Royal Navy played in it. He had some small acquaintance with the Navy and he ventured to say that when this debate was read by the officers and seamen of the Royal Navy it would cause very indignant reflections which were calculated to affect the Navy very seriously. He believed that the officers and men in the Navy would consider that their employment in such a transaction was an insult to their flag. This launch belonged to the Royal Navy. He had reason to remember how very deeply the employment of certain regiments in connection with evictions in Ireland was resented by the officers and men of those regiments, and he fancied that the employment of the military was discontinued owing to the fact that the War Office knew of that resentment. He had reason to think that the same resentment was felt by the naval officers and men in this case. He asked the Chief Secretary to give them the actual cost of this expedition and also to state whether he would withdraw the gunboat from that service. He feared that if the right hon. Gentleman continued his present course he would find his career in the Irish Office quite as rough and stormy as was the sea around Dursey Island.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor.*)

MR. T. L. CORBETT congratulated the mover and seconder of the Resolution upon the smart Parliamentary manœuvre by which they had avoided a discussion upon a question which might have been gravely compromising to their friends. They all knew what this Motion really meant, but if they had not known it before, they would have become acquainted with it after listening to the speeches of the mover and seconder, and especially after the usual vigorous, vocal and gymnastic display of the mover. Not one single fact or argument had been advanced to prove either the necessity or urgency of this Resolution. He felt inclined to repeat an inadmissible phrase and to say that the whole thing was a mere farce. The one object of moving this Resolution was to burke a discussion upon the Resolution dealing with monastic and conventual institutions.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Bring it on again.

MR. T. L. CORBETT suggested that his hon. friends should allow him to move the adjournment of the House and give him a chance of bringing it on.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN (Kilkenny, N.) asked whether the hon. Member was in order in discussing a Motion not before the House and in challenging him in regard to it.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER said the hon. Gentleman had brought the challenge upon himself by intervening in the speech of the hon. Member for North Down.

MR. T. L. CORBETT said the object of the Resolution was simply to blame the Government for having used sufficient force to protect the police in the execution of their duty, and to protect them from being wounded and possibly killed. The Government had only used sufficient force to carry out the law. He could quite understand the simulated indignation of hon. Members opposite because they had become accustomed during the past few months to the operations of the Land League. The new Chief Secretary was evidently determined to do his duty and would earn the gratitude—the lasting gratitude—of all those who did not live upon Irish discontent. If the right hon. Gentleman wished to govern Ireland well he must be served by loyal and trustworthy men and he must remember that those who were serving him were 500 miles away from London. It was too late to hope for the other Resolution to be discussed that evening, and he would content himself by repeating that the object of the manœuvre was perfectly obvious to the House and would be on the morrow perfectly obvious to the country. He doubted whether such a smart manœuvre was worthy either of hon. Gentlemen opposite or of the Church to which they belonged.

*MR. MOONEY (Dublin County, S.) said the last speech had nothing to do with the Motion before the House, but was the speech of an hon. Gentleman who had been disappointed by not having the opportunity of making a speech on a subject which he had taken considerable trouble to make his own. He congratulated the House on the presence of the Chief Secretary, who was absent when the subjects of Irish Universities and the shortcomings of his Department were discussed. They wanted to find out the plans of the Government for the future government of Ireland without attending the annual dinner of the members of the North Down Staghounds, where he understood the Chief Secretary had laid down his policy for the governing of the country. They also wanted to know by what authority and by whose orders the naval and military forces of the Crown were employed upon this eviction in Dursey Island. The right hon. Gentleman was the head of something like forty Boards in Ireland, and was President of every one of them, but there was no such position in Ireland as the Commander of the Naval Forces, and they wanted to know who put this naval force into motion in this instance. Was it done by the Chief Secretary alone, or by that right hon. Gentleman in conjunction with the Admiralty, and, if so, what branch of the Irish Office was responsible? Perhaps they would be told by the right hon. Gentleman, on the advice of the Attorney-General, that the police were sheriff's officers once the decree had been issued.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): He will not state anything so unfounded or ridiculous.

*MR. MOONEY said that might be, but if he did it would not be the first unfounded and ridiculous statement of Law which they would have heard from the Attorney-General, and as long as he continued in his present office they were sure to hear a good many more which could properly be described in the elegant language of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. He repeated that they were entitled to know by whose authority the police and naval force were sent to Dursey Island. It looked suspicious when the Chief Secretary went over to Ireland, wandered about the country for a fortnight, and then lectured Irishmen on the social and economic condition of the country. Also that immediately after his visit to Lord Londonderry the marauding expedition was sent. Were the Irish landlords to employ these forces to collect rents which had been declared to be unjustifiable, and which ought not to be paid by the people?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said he knew a great deal more of the eviction question twenty years ago than he did now. He had been through these eviction campaigns, and after having seen thousands of tenants evicted they had passed a great measure through the House, part of the policy of which was to restore to their homes and holdings the very people who years ago were evicted at an enormous cost to the country and an enormous sorrow to themselves. The Estates Commissioners were now charged with the duty of undoing the mischief that was then done. These men were being restored to their holdings, and the Estates Commissioners were absolutely giving them grants of public money to equip the holdings that were wrecked and ruined by the evictors. Surely the people of England took credit for being a practical people, but it was not practical politics to put men out at great cost and suffering and then ten, fifteen, or twenty years afterwards pass an Act of Parliament to restore them and set them up in business again. Every one who had followed the Land question in the South of Ireland knew this particular estate and knew who was behind the scenes making a settlement impossible. The Chief Secretary was President of the Congested Districts Board, and the policy of that Board was to buy up estates of this kind and try to make it possible for the poor people to live upon the land which they cultivated. Would the Chief Secretary tell the House whether the Congested Districts Board had intervened in this case and if their offers had been rejected by the landlord? Did they offer a price for this estate? Estate! What a farce talking about an estate. It reminded him of the Question put by an Ulster Member recently about an outrage in Galway where seventeen yards of wall had been thrown down in order to allow cattle to stray. Of course English Members believed that was a mason-built wall; instead of which it was a wall of loose stones about a couple of feet high, and if one stepped over it about half of it would tumble down. So when they talked about this Dursey Island as an estate many Members would imagine it was an estate such as they owned in England, whereas no English Member would take it as a present. The Chief Secretary ought to be able to tell the House whether the Congested Districts Board made an offer for this estate and whether it was refused. Now, forsooth, the forces of the Crown, the police, and the Navy of England were being used for the purpose of enforcing the claim which the Chief Secretary knew perfectly well the Congested Districts Board believed to be unfair.

These islands had been troublesome in the past. The story of Clare Island was well known. There was a time when the forces of the Crown could not land on Clare Island to execute a decree. The Congested Districts Board, however, bought out the landlord, and peace and happiness had reigned in that island since that day. The landlord in that case was a reasonable man. He was not a bankrupt landlord backed by Lord Ardilaun. That was the secret of the whole business. Let there be no mistake about that. The Chief Secretary would say, no doubt, that he was bound to give the forces of the Crown to execute a decree of the Courts, and he did not challenge that. But after the Act of 1903 he thought they had advanced somewhat, because of the conciliation proposed in that Act. If it could not rescue Dursey Island from this man's power and tyranny, what was the Act worth? These were the people the right hon. Member for Dover intended to protect. And if in the part of the country from whence he came the question of the evicted tenants did not count for much, he would tell the House that the Ulster farmers were quite as keen to get these questions settled as were the farmers in the South and West. And the Member for North Down would find that the farmers in his constituency would consider this evening far more profitably spent in discussing this question of Dursey Island than if they had listened to the Member for North Down on the subject of conventual and monastic institutions.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT: Would the hon. Member have sympathised with my Motion.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said he should require to hear the hon. Member before he answered the Question. The Chief Secretary was commencing his career in Ireland. Did he think the game worth the candle to put these poor tenants out and then put them back again? Did he think the landlord was right in refusing the offer of the Congested Districts Board? The Chief Secretary must surely see the force of those Questions.

The CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.) ventured to say that among all hon. Gentlemen, whether from Irish or other constituencies, who had from time to time addressed that House on the question of Irish land, there was no one who had spoken oftener or with greater energy than the hon. Member for South Tyrone. Yet it was a strange proof of the difficulty of the situation in which the House found itself that that hon. Gentleman had failed altogether to realise what was the actual question under consideration, and what he (Mr. Long) had to meet at the present time. The hon. Gentlemen who had addressed the House had not confined themselves to the actual question at issue, which was a very simple one. It was whether or not the supply of the police and the vessel which carried them over from the mainland to the island, by the Government was a proper proceeding or not. That was the question to be decided that night, but in all the speeches that had been delivered that question had been brushed aside, in a desire which no one could wonder at, to discuss the general land question and the general land policy. As the hon. Member for South Tyrone had said, it was all very well to discuss these technical questions as to whether the action of the Government was legal or illegal. What was the object of passing the Act of 1903? It would be out of order for him to debate the policy and the administration of the Act of 1903; that had nothing whatever to do with the subject before the House. It might be desirable to employ the Act of 1903 to put back the evicted tenants, but that was not the question. It might be the fact that they had evicted tenants before and had now to face the difficulty of their replacement, but that was not the question. The question was a very simple one. The mover of the Motion cited precedents and referred to the action taken by Mr. Drummond in regard to tithe collection, and his right hon. friend the Member for West Bristol in regard to the Clanricarde case, and the debate had proceeded as if the work of the police consisted in the collection of rent. That was a mistake. The action of the police was to support the sheriff in carrying out the order of the Court. In the discharge of his duty the sheriff was entitled to call upon all citizens to support him, and he was entitled to call upon the forces of the Crown and the police to help him. The passing of the Act of 1903, did not alter the law in the slightest degree, nor did it alter the fact that when a landlord had obtained a decree, and it passed into the hands of the sheriff, that official was entitled to call for as much support as he might require to enforce it, and there was no discretion in the Executive Government whether or not that support should be given. Therefore, to discuss this matter as *pari passu* with the administration of the Act of 1903, or as a part of the land policy of Ireland was, first of all, to seek to obliterate the real issue, and, in the second place, to drag the administration of the Land Act into a discussion which was more likely to prejudice than to advance its success

The hon. Member's account of the invasion of the island of Dursey was in part painful and in part amusing. As to visiting the island, probably the hon. Member and he were in the same position, but, if the hon. Member really believed that he had never heard of the island before, why was he indicting him for the action he had taken in connection with it? It was perfectly true that the Congested Districts Board made an offer for this island which was not accepted by the landlord; but that fact did not alter the law which prevailed as much in England as in Ireland. Having listened to these debates for twenty years in that House, he had often asked himself why such a story as that told by the hon. Member should move listeners to it much more than a similar story, which might be told any day, of evictions attended with equal misery and suffering in the East End of London and in the poorer districts of other cities. There were in those districts of England the same abject poverty and misery and the same bitterness of feeling at being turned out of home. He did not blame the hon. Member for introducing that aspect of the question, but it had nothing to do with the subject before the House. The law which had been called into operation in Ireland acted with the same force in England. The same right pertained to the sheriff, and the same duty devolved on the Executive Government. In this matter the Government had no discretion. On more than one occasion the law had been clearly laid down. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose, when he was Chief Secretary, thought that he had a discretion to say in what way the power of the Executive should be exercised, and he sought to establish that position. The case was taken to the Courts, and it was decided that no such discretion belonged to the Executive; but that it was bound to afford to the sheriff such support as he required for the performance of his duty. It was useless, therefore, to go back to older precedents. The action of the right hon. Member for West Bristol was taken in regard to a totally different situation. His right hon. friend then declared that he did not believe in wholesale evictions, and attempted to advise the landlords as to what their policy should be. ["Did you in this case?"] No, because he had not had the opportunity, and whether if he had had the opportunity he would have done so was another matter. The application for assistance was made to him after the decree of the Court had been granted; and he had no right or power to make any suggestion.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): Could you not delay giving the use of the gunboat?

Mr. WALTER LONG said he was advised that he had no right to delay; but if he could have delayed giving assistance, would it have been an honest operation? And what purpose would it have served?

An HON. MEMBER: It would have allowed you to inquire.

Mr. WALTER LONG pointed out that even supposing he had inquired, and found that the rents were exorbitant and that the action of the landlord was cruel, that would not alter the law or the sheriff's obligation to carry it out. The duty of the Executive was clear, and there was no object to be gained by postponing it. He had no power to refuse the requisition of the sheriff, and, if he did, he would be liable to indictment for failure to do his duty.

An HON. MEMBER: The Attorney-General would pack the jury for you, and it would be all right.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL asked what was the difference between the action of the right hon. Gentleman and that of the right hon. Member for West Bristol.

Mr. WALTER LONG said that, in the case of the Clanricarde Estate, the sheriff had made no demand for the assistance of the *posse comitatus*. The landlords had indicated to the Executive their intention to adopt a particular policy; and the Minister was entitled in that case to point out the difficulties which might follow from that course. But in the present case there had been no application from the landlord. The usual insinuations had been made and Lord Ardilaun's name had been mentioned. There had been no backstairs influence used. The matter had followed the ordinary straightforward course. The sheriff made the demand for the force he required to carry out his duty; and the Government had no power or right to refuse that demand. There was really nothing more to be said. The hon. Gentleman gave his own account, a graphic and somewhat coloured account, of the way in which the landing was effected and the work was done. He said that the police fixed bayonets and clubbed their rifles in order to deal with the islanders.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said that was not his statement. He quoted it from a London Unionist newspaper.

Mr. WALTER LONG said he did not intend in the smallest degree to misrepresent the hon. Gentleman. He quite understood that he was quoting from a London newspaper. Well, the report which he had himself received from the police.—[Ironical NATIONALIST cheers.] They were at least as likely to know the facts as the London newspaper. The hon. Member had stated there was no post office or telegraph and that it was impossible except under most difficult circumstances to get from the mainland to the island. He thought, therefore, the police report was as likely to be accurate as that of the hon. Member.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said he had made no report. He quoted from a Unionist organ which was not likely to err on the side of friendliness to the tenants.

MR. WALTER LONG said that of course he could not complain if the hon. Member thought it right to resort to Unionist organs for accurate information. He had no desire to conceal the fact that his report was from the police. He had had a short experience of the Irish police force, but it had been long enough to convince him that it did its best in all circumstances, some of them circumstances of difficulty, to do its duty, and that the officers made accurate and reliable reports of the work they carried out. The newspaper report stated that the police fixed bayonets and clubbed rifles. The information given to him, and he stood by it, was that they did nothing of the kind. They effected their landing very much as the hon. Gentleman had described, and they appeared to deserve the credit for tactics and strategy which the hon. Gentleman gave them. Surely no fault ought to be found with them because they had an officer of great ability who disposed his forces so as to effect a landing with the minimum of personal violence. If it were true, as he believed it to be, that bayonets were not fixed and rifles were not clubbed, then it was clear that the work was done in a manner which reflected credit on the police.

It had been said that the Government were lending themselves to the collection of exorbitant rents and to the maintenance of the landlords. He confessed that he had never been very much dismayed or troubled by charges of that kind. The Government had given abundant proof of their desire to settle by fair and just means the land difficulty in Ireland, and he would warn hon. Gentlemen opposite ["Oh,"] that they would not help the successful working of the Act of 1903, from which they and the House had hoped so much, by attacks such as those which they had made that night. The Act was passed with a certain and definite object, and under a definite belief on the part of the British Parliament. The Irish Executive were doing their best to give effect to the wishes of Parliament. ["To destroy it."] To drag in a difficulty of this kind which had nothing to do with the administration of the Act was not calculated to help its administration, or to help the Government to face the difficulties which they had to face and overcome if they were to solve the land question in Ireland. He submitted that no case had been made out for the condemnation it was sought to pass on the action of the Government, and that it had not been established that they had a discretion, that they had any right whatever, to refuse the assistance demanded of them. The Government had acted in this matter constitutionally and with propriety, and on those grounds he asked the House to reject the Motion.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said he deeply sympathised with the hon. Member for North Down in the disappointment he had experienced, but probably nine-tenths of the Irish people would regard the question under discussion as of more importance than the subject of the Motion the hon. Member had intended to bring forward. As a private Member, however, he held that it was a grievance and a hardship that the right of moving the adjournment should interfere with the opportunities of private Members, and if any proposal were made to remedy that grievance he would be the first to support it. When the rule was under discussion he warned the House of the danger of such an occurrence as had happened that night, but the hon. Member and his friends gave him no support.

MR. T. L. CORBETT: I did not know the hon. Member and his friends so well as I know them now.

MR. DILLON said that was another reason for being glad that his hon. friend the Member for the Scotland Division had brought this matter forward, and when next he stood up in defence of the rights of private Members he should count on the support of the hon. Member for North Down.

For the first time he had had the pleasure of listening to the new Chief Secretary on Irish affairs. The warning the right hon. Gentleman had just uttered took him back to the days of Mr. Forster and the Land Bill of 1881. The Irish Party were warned then that if they did not behave themselves and did not give up agitation they would not get any of the benefits that this House was longing to bestow upon them. They had been constantly listening to such warnings during the last quarter of a century, constantly disregarding them, and constantly reaping the reward of that course. He was not one of those who had expected much from the Act of 1903, but although he belonged to the class described in the "beatitude"—blessed are they who expect little, for they shall not be disappointed — yet he had been disappointed, because they had obtained much less than even he had expected. The Chief Secretary had declared that the Executive Government were engaged in endeavouring to extract from the Land Act of 1903 all the benefit they could for the people of Ireland. [MR. WALTER LONG: Hear, hear!] And with the sublime audacity of an Irish Secretary the right hon. Gentleman cheered that statement. The Irish Executive were engaged to-day in strangling the Act, and that statement would be proved when the Report of the Commissioners was issued. Whatever benefits the Act of 1903 had conferred—experience had shown them to be deplorably short of the hopes held out by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover—had been destroyed by the constant and maleficent interference of the Irish Executive. The hands of the Commissioners had been tied, and the present discussion and controversy were largely the direct result of the conduct of the Executive in destroying by their rules and regulations the effect of the Act of 1903. The Chief Secretary had passed over the Questions addressed to him by the hon. Member for the Scotland Division, and had concentrated his reply on the old formula that the Executive had absolutely no discretion but to supply the sheriff with whatever military force he might ask for. If the sheriff had demanded a battleship would the Government have supplied him with it? Did the right hon. Gentleman contend that if the sheriff had demanded a regiment or two regiments of soldiers the Executive had no discretion in the matter, and would have to supply such a demand? When the right hon. Member for West Bristol remonstrated with Lord Clanricarde he told his lordship that, in the event of any application being made for the services of the constabulary or the military, compliance would be retarded by the pressure of other claims and duties and their employment would be postponed to the utmost extent.

Mr. WALTER LONG pointed out that he had also referred to the precedent of the right hon. Member for Montrose Burghs, in which case it was made clear that such action on the part of the Chief Secretary which the hon. Member had just referred to was illegal and could not be maintained.

Mr. DILLON claimed that he had proved that the right hon. Gentleman's contention was wrong as far as those words were concerned, because the right hon. Member for West Bristol distinctly stated that if the police were applied for their employment would be delayed.

Mr. WALTER LONG said his point was that the right hon. Member for Montrose Burghs tried to do the same thing, and it was found that he had not the legal authority to do it.

Mr. DILLON recalled the time when Sir Redvers Buller was sent over to Ireland to take command in Kerry when that part of Ireland was unfortunately more disturbed than it was at the present time, and said that he adopted the same course. When he (the hon. Member) was committed for trial in December, 1887, they summoned Sir Redvers Buller as a witness, and he gave evidence to the effect that he was so shocked at the conduct of the landlords of Kerry that he required a statement from the agent as to the amount of rent and arrears they required.

Mr. WALTER LONG said the hon. Member was ignoring the point he had made that whatever the view taken by Sir Redvers Buller or other Chief Secretaries might be, when it was sought to take the course adopted by the right hon. Member for West Bristol it was laid down by the Courts as illegal.

Mr. DILLON said that did not alter the fact that two great officials representing the Government who were sent over to Ireland at a time of great disturbance did lay down that policy and practised it, and they were coerced into taking that extreme course by the misconduct of the Irish landlords. The right hon. Gentleman had passed over some of the main features of this extraordinary case. Was it contended that the Irish Executive were bound, without inquiry into the circumstances of the case, to give a sheriff any force which he in his discretion demanded?

Mr. WALTER LONG said he had laid down the law, and he defied the hon. Gentleman to dispute it. Where a sheriff was called upon to execute a decree of the Court, and in order to execute it required a *posse comitatus*, he was entitled to have it, whether it was police or soldiers.

MR. DILLON: Are we to be told that a sheriff is to get any force he demands?

MR. WALTER LONG: Of course not.

MR. DILLON said that was the point. Who was responsible for sending a force of 200 police to carry out the eviction of one tenant on the island? Was any attempt made to carry out the operation peaceably? Did the Chief Secretary address any remonstrance to the landlord, pointing out that he was contravening the policy of Parliament and acting in a manner likely to raise a disturbance without sufficient reason? What was the cost of the expedition? Probably it would cost £300 or £400 to recover the holding, upon which the debt was £29. How long was the expedition to remain on the island, and what was it doing now?

MR. WALTER LONG said a small force remained on the island for the protection of life and property. The police assisted the sheriff in the execution of his duty, and the property was now in the possession of the representative of the person to whom it belonged. A certain number of police remained on the island to see that no injury occurred to life and property there.

MR. DILLON said that was doing the work of the landlord, and not executing the decree of the Court. The retention of the police was in the discretion of the Government, and at the cost of £2,000 a year the police were kept there to secure to the landlord possession of a farm worth £9 a year. Such was the absurdity of the system of Irish government.

A UNIONIST MEMBER: If it was only worth ninepence the owner is entitled to protection.

MR. DILLON said the hon. Member opposite was using the absurd argument that if a landlord wanted possession of a piece of land worth ninepence it would be the duty of the State to spend £2,000 getting possession of it. That was a *reductio ad absurdum* in connection with Irish government. If the right hon. Gentleman had conveyed a warning to the landlord that in carrying out these operations he would go as far as the law compelled him and not an inch further the eviction would not have taken place. The refusal of the landlord to accept the offer of the Congested Districts Board to buy the island was a proof that the people there could not live and pay their way, and therefore of the unreasonableness of the landlord, of whose conduct there had not been one word of reprobation in the Chief Secretary's speech.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 74; Noes, 134. (Division List No. 148.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Ambrose, Robert
Black, Alexander William
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Burke, E. Haviland
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Cheetham, John Frederick
Delany, William

Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Elibank, Master of
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Grant, Corrie
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir E. (Berwick
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Johnson, John
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Kearley, Hudson E.
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Levy, Maurice
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Price, Robert John
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th
Roe, Sir Thomas
Russell, T. W.
Schwann, Charles E.
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight)
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R. (Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A (Worc.
Channing, Francis Allston
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickson, Charles Scott
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Fergusson, Rt Hn Sir. J. (Man'cr.
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs)
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, Maj. Evans (T'r H'mlets
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Gretton, John
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley)
Heath, Sir James (Staffords. NW
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside)
Hoult, Joseph
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Keswick, William
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Hn. H. L. W. (Mile End)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. NR
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareham
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.)
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Majendie, James A. H.
Marks, Harry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E. (Wigt'n
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriesshire
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Montague, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.)
Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Ridley, S. Forde
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn JG (Oxf'd Univ.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall.
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col. A C E (Taunton)
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt Hn E. R. (Bath)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 4th May, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

SUBSTITUTED BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, introduced in accordance with the provisions of The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Clyde Navigation (Reconstitution) Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.:—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time To-morrow.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow.

Aberdare Urban District Council Bill. Read the third time, and passed. [New Title.]

Colne Corporation Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Halifax Corporation Bill. Read the third time, and passed. [New Title.]

Stockport Corporation Bill (King's Consent signified). Bill read the third time, and passed.

London County Council (Money) Bill. "To regulate the Expenditure of Money by the London County Council on Capital Account during the current Financial Period and the Raising of Money to meet such Expenditure; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Local Government Provisional Order (Gas) Bill. "To confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board relating to Withnell," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 199.]

London United Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill; Hessle Gas Bill [Lords]. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Holy Trinity, Portsea, Bill [Lords]. Reported, with an Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

Marylebone Chapels Bill [Lords]. Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill to be read the third time.

West Cumberland Electric Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords]. Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (PROVISION OF MEALS) BILL.

Petition from Hanley, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions for alteration; from Glasgow; and Stornoway; to lie upon the Table.

LAND VALUES TAXATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Riccarton, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Aberdeen (three); Airdrie; Ardrishaig; Ardrossan; Auchtermuchty; Banff; Bellshill; Benwhat (two); Blairgowrie; Bowmore; Carluke (two); Colmonell; Dailly; Dunbar; Dundee; Dunfermline (three); Dunning; Dunoon; Edinburgh (ten); Elgin (two); Ellenabeich; Fairlie; Glasgow; Glencraig; Grangemouth; Greenock; Haddington; Inverkeithing; Inverness; Keith; Kilburnie; Kilmalcolm; Kirkcaldy; Ladybank; Larchbank; Leslie; Lesmahagow; Leven (three); Leuchars; Linlithgow (two); Lochgelly; Longside; Mains and Strathmartin; Moffat; Monifieth; Newburgh; Newport (Fife); Nitshill; North Berwick (two); Peterhead (two); Pollokshaws; Prestonpans; Riccarton; Sandbank; Shanbryde; Strathkinners; Strathmiglo; Tarbert; Tayport; West Kilbride; Wishaw; and Woodstock; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Pimlico and Westminster; and St. Pancras; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petition from Nettleton, against; to lie upon the Table.

MILK DEPOTS (LONDON) BILL.

Petition from St. Pancras, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petition from Ashton-under-Lyme, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRAINING COLLEGES (IRELAND).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 12th April; *Mr. Sloan*]; to lie upon the Table.

CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD (IRELAND).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 3rd May; *Mr. Walter Long*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 149.]

OUTRAGES (IRELAND).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 3rd May; *Mr. Walter Long*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 150.]

POST OFFICE (PARCEL POST BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA).

Copy presented, of agreement between the Post Office of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office Department of the United States of America for the direct exchange of Parcels by Parcel Post, dated 3rd/17th February, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3361 and 3362 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NATIONAL SCHOOLS (IRELAND) TEACHERS.

Return ordered, " showing—

"(1) The number of Teachers who, after completing a two years course of training, were appointed for the first time as

Principal or Assistant Teachers in National Schools in Ireland in each of the three years immediately preceding the new financial arrangement of 1900, viz., 1897, 1898, 1899, distinguishing between Principal and Assistant Teachers, and between Male and Female Teachers.

"(2) The classification of the Teachers so appointed, distinguishing as before between Principal and Assistant and between Male and Female Teachers.

"(3) The average total salaries paid out of Imperial Funds to the Teachers referred to in Section 1, giving the averages for Principal and Assistant Teachers separately, and for Male and Female Teachers separately.

"(4) The number of Teachers who, after completing a two years course of training, were appointed for the first time as Principal or Assistant Teachers in National Schools in Ireland in each of the years immediately following the new financial arrangement of 1900, viz., 1901, 1902, 1903, distinguishing between Principal and Assistant Teachers and between Male and Female Teachers.

"(5) The classification or grade of the Teachers so appointed, distinguishing as before between Principal and Assistant Teachers and between Male and Female Teachers.

"(6) The average total salaries paid out of Imperial Funds to the Teachers referred to in Section 4, giving the averages for Principal and Assistant Teachers separately, and for Male and Female Teachers separately."—(*Mr. Dillon.*)

GROSS DEPARTMENTAL EXPENDITURE.

Return ordered, "showing for the financial years 1894–5, 1904–5, and 1905–6 (estimated), respectively, the total annual Expenditure of each of the following Departments, viz.:—

"(1) Army (including Ordnance Factories).

"(2) Navy.

"(3) Civil Services.

"(4) Revenue Departments; under each of the following headings for each Department, viz.:—

"(a) Expenditure from net Votes voted in Supply.

"(b) Expenditure from receipts appropriated in aid.

"(c) Expenditure out of issues to meet capital expenditure under various Acts.

"(d) Expenditure incurred on account of this Department by other Departments; together with the totals of (a), (b), (c), and (d), for each of the four Departments, and in addition a deduction, from the total of each Department, of the Expenditure incurred by that Department on account of other Departments."—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

PUBLIC REVENUE (INTERCEPTION).

Return ordered, "of the amounts of all Public Revenue derived from Taxes levied by Parliament and from any other sources, which are not paid into His Majesty's Exchequer, for the years 1903–4, 1904–5, and 1905–6 (estimated), with the totals in each case (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 253, of Session 1904)."—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

NAVAL EXPENDITURE (GREAT BRITAIN AND FOREIGN COUNTRIES).

Return ordered, "of the Naval Expenditure of this Country in the years 1880, 1890, 1901, 1902, 1903, and 1904, and of the Naval Expenditure of France, Russia, Germany, Japan, and America in the same years."—(*Sir Edgar Vincent.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Wages Deductions in the Potteries in Contravention of the Truck Acts.

Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to a letter by Mr. Redgrave, superintending inspector of factories, in which that official says that his experience shows that there are pot banks in which inquiry would easily prove that the Truck Acts are being contravened; whether, in this case, it is the duty of the inspector to prosecute; and whether prosecution will be directed in all such cases with a view to the enforcement of the law.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) I was not aware that a letter had been written by Mr. Redgrave on this subject to the Press; but the question of the system of deductions prevailing in the potteries (many of which I may say are customary deductions of very old standing) has engaged my attention for some time, and special instructions were given some months ago to the superintending inspector to inquire into the matter thoroughly and report to the Department. The investigations are not yet complete, and I have not yet received the report, but I understand that a movement is in progress in the district for the abolition of deductions, and that a number of firms have already wholly or partially abolished them. It is the duty of the inspector to prosecute for contraventions of the Truck Acts, and proceedings will be taken, if necessary, in this trade as in others.

Amendment of the Truck Acts.

Sir CHARLES DILKE: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to the expression, in the judgment of the King's Bench Division, in the case of Squire *v.* the Midland Lace Company, by a Court consisting of the Lord Chief Justice and two other Judges, of a hope that an amendment of the Truck Laws may be made; and whether His Majesty's Government will introduce a Bill to deal with the flaws in the Truck Acts revealed in the failure of this and some other recent prosecutions by His Majesty's inspectors of factories.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) My attention has been called to the remarks of Mr. Justice Kennedy in the case to which the right hon. Baronet refers. I consider that it is desirable to amend and consolidate the Truck Acts, but I cannot undertake to introduce a Bill for that purpose in the present session.

Vaccination Prosecutions at Brighton.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the vaccination officer for the borough of Brighton has recently obtained warrants of distress upon the goods of several persons in the borough for alleged non-compliance with the terms of The Vaccination Act, 1898; and, seeing that this officer is employed by the Brighton Board of Guardians, and paid by that body, will he state why they were not communicated with before such measures were resorted to.

(*Answered by Mr. Grant Lawson.*) The Local Government Board have not received any information as to the matter referred to; but, in their opinion, the application for a distress warrant forms part of the proceedings for the enforcement of the Vaccination Acts. These proceedings the vaccination officer is empowered to take without previous communication with the guardians.

Consular Reports.

Sir SAMUEL SCOTT (Marylebone, W.): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether instructions can be given to His Majesty's Consular officials to expedite the sending of Consular Reports upon the Trade and Commerce of Foreign Countries and Towns; and whether the Foreign Office can arrange for the prompter issue to the public of such Reports.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) With regard to the first part of the Question, a Circular Despatch on the subject has already been prepared, and is about to be sent to His Majesty's Consular officials. As regards publication, it is not found possible to edit and print the Reports more promptly than is done at present.

Scottish Church Dispute.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): To ask the Lord-Advocate whether he can now state the number of churches now in possession of the legal Free Church, distinguishing the number in their possession at October, 1900, and those subsequently obtained by interdict or otherwise in consequence of the House of Lords judgment; the number of notices of ejectment from their manses recently served on ministers of the United Free Church, and the form of such notice; and will he specify according to counties the number of churches held by the legal Free Church, and the number of manses to which the notices as above were sent.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) According to my latest information I believe the following figures correctly give the facts desired by the hon. Member: At the present time the Free Church is in possession altogether of 121 churches or thereby. Of these thirty were retained by the Free Church at October, 1900. The remainder have been regained since that date, the great majority of them since the judgment of the House of Lords 1st August last. Forty-two have been regained by processes of interdict. One hundred and fifteen notices in terms of the annexed print were issued to ministers of the United Free Church on 3rd ultimo.

Note.—According to Counties of the number of Churches held by Free Church and number of manses to which above-mentioned notices were sent.

Name of County.	Number of Churches held.	Number of manse notices issued.
Argyll - - - - - - -	13	17
Aberdeen - - - - - - -	1	0
Ayr - - - - - - -	3	4
Bute - - - - - - -	8	6
Caithness - - - - - - -	7	8
Dumbarton - - - - - -	1	1
Edinburgh - - - - - - -	2	1
Elgin - - - - - - -	1	1
Fife - - - - - - -	3	1
Forfar - - - - - - -	1	0
Inverness - - - - - - -	25	27
Lanark - - - - - - -	4	1
Nairn - - - - - - -	1	1
Orkney - - - - - - -	0	1
Perth - - - - - - -	1	4
Renfrew - - - - - - -	1	1
Ross - - - - - - -	39	32
Sutherland - - - - - -	10	9
Totals - - - -	121	115

Form of Notice.

18, Heriot Row, Edinburgh.
3rd April, 1905.

Reverend and Dear Sir,

..............Free Church.

On behalf of the Free Church of Scotland and this congregation, we are instructed to intimate to you that the manse pertaining to the congregation at present occupied by you may shortly be required for the use of a minister of the Free Church. Our clients desire to arrange with you amicably as to your removal which, in the circumstances, you will no doubt recognise to be inevitable. We shall therefore be glad to have from you an undertaking to remove at May 28th next, or so soon thereafter as may be required by our clients, on your receiving from them one month's previous notice in writing. If you do not see your way to give such an undertaking, we shall be under the necessity of taking proceedings in Court against you. Kindly let us hear from you in course. Meantime, and unless otherwise arranged, you will please accept this letter as formal notice to leave at May 28th next.

Yours faithfully,

....

To the Reverend................

United Free Church Minister.

Post Office and National Telephone Company's Employees.

Sir JOHN LENG (Dundee): To ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to Clause 8, Section 7, of the Telegraph Act, 1863–1892, under which the Post Office in taking over the establishments of the then existing telegraph companies also undertook to employ every officer and clerk of the companies who had been not less than five or seven years in the service of the companies, or failing such employment to give them compensation in annual pensions fixed according to length of service; whether it was also arranged in the case of the telegraph companies' servants that those who entered into the service of the Postmaster-General should be entitled to count their years of continuous service with the telegraph companies as years passed in the Civil Service of the Crown: and whether he will state that similar arrangements will be extended to the servants of the National Telephone Company as were made forty-two years ago in the case of the servants of the telegraph companies.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I am aware of the provisions in the Telegraph Act of 1868 dealing with the transfer of the staffs of the various telegraph companies to the Post Office, provisions which are not quite correctly stated by the hon. Member. I am not prepared to propose similar arrangements as regards the staff of the National Telephone Company, since I believe that to follow that precedent in the present instance would impose an inequitable burden on the taxpayers of the United Kingdom.

Postal Work at Coleraine.

Mr. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that at Coleraine the total amount of cash, licences, postal orders, and stamps, varying from £300 to £700 per day, has been in charge of the sorting clerk and telegraphist at the counter work, and in February last a Return was furnished on these lines; that on April 1st these figures were reduced by nearly one-half and a Return taken and substituted for the previous one by special instruction of the surveyor, and that since then the reduction in licences, postal orders, and stamps has been maintained, but the full amount of cash has been replaced; and, if so, will he say whether these alterations were made for the purpose of dealing with the reclassification of offices; and whether a similar method has been adopted in other offices.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I have no information about the circumstances to which the hon. Member refers, but I may at once say that they could have no bearing whatever on the classification of Coleraine.

Construction of Harbour at Innishlyre, near Westport.

Dr. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is intended to construct the harbour at Innishlyre, near Westport, for which a grant has been allocated under the Marine Works (Ireland) Act; and, if so, when will the works be commenced.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I am not at present in a position to give a definite reply to this Question. The Government are in communication with the Midland Great Western Railway Company on the subject.

Sales under the Irish Land Act of 1903.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in cases of sale under the Land Act of 1903, the Estates Commissioners do not collect the interest accruing before the issue of the vesting order where the sale takes place under Form H; and, if so, what is the cause of this departure from the ordinary procedure.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Form H has reference to the sale by the vendor, to any of the classes of purchasers enumerated in Sections 2 and 4, of a parcel of land at the time of the agreement for sale in the occupation of the vendor; and the seventh paragraph of the form provides that the purchaser is to be put in possession on a day not later than the day of the advance. The 35th Section of the Land Act of 1896 does not apply to such cases. Whenever the vendor puts the purchaser into possession arrangements may be made between them for the payment of interest pending the making of the advance, but such interest is not collectible by the Land Commission.

Jamaica Steamship Service.

MR. GUTHRIE (Tower Hamlets, Bow): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies what modifications, if any, have been made in the contract dated April 19th, 1900, with Elder, Dempster, and Company, for a steamship service between Jamaica and the United Kingdom; whether, in view of the fact that the condition in Clause 3, Sub-section (a), of that contract, providing that on or before January 16th, 1904, the steamers used in the service to date should be replaced by larger and swifter steamers, with an average speed of not less than thirteen knots an hour, with adequate space for the conveyance of fruit and passengers, has not been fulfilled, he will say whether the yearly subsidy of £40,000 per annum has, in accordance with the contract, been reduced to £30,000 per annum as from January 16th, 1901, and, if so, what has been the amount of subsidy repaid by the contractors, or what amount has been deducted from the subsidy; whether he is aware that the obligation under the contract to purchase, at current market rates, 20,000 bunches of bananas for each voyage from Jamaica to the English port has not been carried out, and that this part of the contract is now being carried out by an American fruit trust; whether the consent of the Crown Agents has been given to any assignment or underlease of the benefit of the contract, or any part thereof, dated April 19th, 1900; and whether, seeing that the condition of the contract dated January 16th, 1900, with Messrs. Elder, Dempster, and Company, making provision for a service for two ports in Jamaica, has, as regards Port Antonio, never been fulfilled, he will say whether any, and, if any, what, equivalent or compensation has been obtained for the loss to the colony of this service.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) No modifications have been made in the contract referred to. The steamers at present employed in the service satisfy all the requirements of Clause 3 of the contract, with the possible exception of the provision as to speed (Sub-section b) with regard to which there have been negotiations with the contractors; and one of the steamers employed largely exceeds the requirement of the contract as regards both speed and capacity. No deduction has been made from the subsidy payable to the contractors. The obligation to purchase, at current market rates, 20,000 bunches of bananas for each voyage has been carried out by the contractors with the exception of a period subsequent to the hurricane of August, 1903, when no bananas were procurable. No part of the contract has been assigned or underlet, but the contractors have appointed Messrs. Elders and Fyffes, Limited, their agents for carrying out that part of the contract which relates to the purchase of fruit. The condition requiring that the contract steamers should call at Port Antonio has been waived with the consent of the Jamaica Government, a service carried on by Messrs. Elders and Fyffes between Montego Bay and Manchester being accepted in the first instance as an equivalent. Since the discontinuance of that service the contractors have initiated a new service between England and the northern ports of Jamaica, the continuance of which will be conditional upon its receiving reasonable support from the Jamaica fruit-growers.

Amounts received by Royal Patriotic Corporation towards Soldiers Effects Fund under the Regimental Debts Act.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport): To ask the Secretary of State for War the various amounts handed over in the last ten years to the Royal Patriotic Corporation under the Regimental Debts Act, towards the Soldiers Effects Fund, and the date of the most recent contribution.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The amounts handed over annually to the Royal Patriotic Fund Corporation for the Soldiers Effects Fund during the last ten years were as follows:—

		£.	s.	d.
Handed over in	1895	5,403	13	2
,,	1896	3,129	19	11
,,	1897	1,544	2	1
,,	1898	3,208	2	5
,,	1899	1,397	1	8
,,	1900	1,465	5	8
,,	1901	2,866	4	2
,,	1902	3,186	7	0
,,	1903	1,272	2	5
,,	May, 1904	2,263	4	8
		£25,736	3	2

A sum of £5,943 3s. 2d. is about to be handed over to the Corporation. These amounts represent stock (Consols), the result of investments of cash balances of "Effects" (and dividends thereon) pending the completion of the period after which they became available for transfer to the Patriotic Fund under the Regimental Debts Act, 1893.

Promotion of Warrant Officers (Royal Artillery)—Age Limits.

MR. KEARLEY: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the age limit for promotion of warrant officers, Royal Artillery, to lieutenant district officer is forty years, and to quartermaster forty-five years; and, if so, what is the reason of such distinction; and whether it is possible to make the age limit for promotion to the former rank the same as to the latter.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The age limits are as stated in the Question. It is regarded as a concession to deserving warrant officers to take them as old as forty-five for the position of quartermaster, but in view of the more active duties of district officer it is held that the age of forty should not be exceeded at the time of selection. It is not, therefore, considered advisable to make the suggested alteration in the regulations.

Army Estimates—Vote 7.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury when he can take Vote 7 of the Army Estimates; and whether he will place this Vote on an early Supply night, to enable the action of the War Office in regard to Army boot contracts to be discussed.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) I cannot as yet fix the date for taking this Vote, but I may remind the hon. Member that a great deal of time has been given this session to Army Votes and that other Supply Services have claims upon the attention of Committee of Supply.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

H.M.S. "Stormcock"—British Gunboats at Irish Evictions.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he can say by whose authority H.M.S. "Stormcock" was recently employed to convey bailiffs and police to Dursey Island for the purpose of carrying out evictions; whether the expenses incurred in the transport of the bailiffs and police were defrayed by the Admiralty and will appear in the Naval Estimates; and whether it is proposed to place His

Majesty's ships at the disposal of evicting Irish landlords.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge): The Admiralty having ascertained through the Irish Executive that the sheriff had *bona fide* requisitioned the services of this vessel, then in his bailiwick, to aid him in the execution of the King's writ, issued the necessary directions accordingly. So far as known no special expenses were incurred in connection with this service.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the last part of the Question.

*MR. PRETYMAN: I think it was hardly asked seriously, but if the hon. Member desires an Answer it is in the negative.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): Was not the "Stormcock" sent to the rescue of a vessel on the rocks, and did she not arrive too late because her men were engaged in bombarding a poor man's hut?

[No Answer was returned.]

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Are officers and men joining the Royal Navy informed that they will be expected to assist in Irish evictions?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: That is really not relevant to the Question on the Paper.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Was the instruction given by the Admiralty here or was the communication solely with the admiral at Queenstown?

*MR. PRETYMAN: The orders were issued by the Admiralty here.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Were the bluejackets under the command of the civil or of the naval authorities on this occasion?

*MR. PRETYMAN: There were no naval ratings on the boat.

MR. REDDY (King's County, Birr): What has been the cost of the expedition to the Admiralty?

*MR. PRETYMAN: I have said no expenses were incurred.

Discharges from Chatham Dockyard.

MR. TUFF (Rochester): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, in view of the present condition of trade in this country and the fact that the question of the unemployed is still engaging the consideration of the municipalities of Rochester, Chatham, and Gillingham, he could see his way to recommending the postponement of further discharges in His Majesty's Dockyard at Chatham.

*MR. PRETYMAN: I fear the hon. Member's request cannot be complied with, as the effect of postponing discharges now would be to increase the number necessarily discharged at a later date, and a time of year more unsuitable for obtaining employment elsewhere.

Naval Construction.

MR. PARTINGTON (Derbyshire, High Peak): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he can give the amount of tonnage and its cost added by new construction to the British, French, German, United States of America, and Russian navies for the five years ending 31st March, 1905.

*MR. PRETYMAN: These figures will take some time to prepare, and I shall be glad if the hon. Member would postpone his Question till Monday.

Flogging in Military Prisons.

MR. TOMKINSON (Cheshire, Crewe): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War how many cases of corporal punishment by flogging there have been in the military prisons at home and abroad during the year 1904.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): In military prisons at home there were no cases. Abroad there were two cases, both for gross personal violence to prison officers.

MR. TOMKINSON asked if it would not be possible to place Returns on these subjects in the hands of hon. Members during the session instead of distributing them in the uutumn?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said it was difficult to anticipate the Returns, but if the hon. Member required any special information he would endeavour to get it for him.

Powers of the Transvaal Assembly.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies what powers are given to the Transvaal Representative Assembly for the control of the railways, the South African Constabulary, the land settlement schemes, the taxation essential to pay the interest on the £35,000,000 loan, and the taxation on commodities imported into the country.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): The control of railways, of the South African Constabulary, and of expenditure out of the Guaranteed Loan on Land Settlement is by the Order in Council of May 20th, 1903, printed at page 5 of Cd. 1641, vested in the Intercolonial Council. The new Assembly will have powers of legislation with regard to land settlement. The interest on the £35,000,000 loan is a first charge upon railway revenue, which is under the control of the Intercolonial Council, and is further secured on all the assets and revenues of the Transvaal. Customs taxation is fixed by legislation in the Transvaal as well as in the other South African Colonies in accordance with the Customs Convention between the Colonies of 1903. It can only be varied by fresh agreement between the several contracting Colonies.

British Labour in South Africa.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, under the new Transvaal Constitution, it will be possible for the Legislative Assembly to pass a law, similar to the Australian Immigration Act, whereby working men belonging to the United Kingdom may be excluded from the Colony.

MR. LYTTELTON: Any legislation relating to immigration would, of course, be subject to the ordinary power of disallowance belonging to the Crown.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Will it be exercised in the case I have mentioned?

MR. LYTTELTON: I am not going into an hypothesis of that kind.

Responsible Government in Orange River Colony.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any communications have been received from the Governor of the Orange River Colony with regard to the granting of representative or responsible government to that colony at the same time as to the Transvaal, and to the state of opinion in the Orange River Colony on the subject; and will such communication be laid upon the Table.

MR. LYTTELTON: The Governor has informed me that a resolution in favour of responsible government was passed at a Congress held at Brandfort at the beginning of December, but the deputation which presented the resolutions passed at the Conference to the Lieutenant-Governor did not refer to this particular resolution, which was not included among those he was desired to forward. I have also received an account of a meeting at which a resolution in favour of responsible government was passed at Vrede in February. I will include these resolutions among the next Papers.

Mineral Concessions in India.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will give a Return of the mineral concessions granted in India since 1880, showing the position and extent of the areas and the names of the parties to whom the concessions have been granted; and whether he will state the general nature of the terms.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): I will ask the Government of India whether the Return for which the hon. Member asks can be compiled without an inordinate amount of labour, and will acquaint the hon. Member with the result. Some, though not all, of the information is given in the Government of India's Annual Return of Mineral Production. The general nature of the terms of mining concessions in India is shown in the Indian mining rules, of which I shall be happy to send the hon. Member a copy.

Lord Kitchener and the Indian Government.

Mr. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he has any official information showing that Lord Kitchener is dissatisfied with the existing conditions attaching to his post of Commander-in-Chief in India.

Mr. BRODRICK: The present system of Army administration in India has recently been the subject of correspondence with the Government of India, and is at present under the consideration of His Majesty's Government.

Mr. DALZIEL: The right hon. Gentleman has in no way whatever answered the Question. Does he see any objection to Lord Kitchener's Memorandum on the subject being laid on the Table?

Mr. BRODRICK: I could not possibly lay it on the Table, because it forms part of a correspondence which is at this moment under consideration of the Government.

Mr. DALZIEL: Can the right hon. Gentleman not answer my Question?

Mr. BRODRICK: I have already answered the Question, Sir. It is quite contrary to all custom that correspondence relating to the Indian Government and the opinions of particular members of the Indian Government should be cited in this House when they are under consideration of the Government.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Has Lord Kitchener tendered his resignation? Answer me that.

[No Answer was returned.]

Arsenic in Beer.

Dr. HUTCHINSON (Sussex, Rye): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board what steps have been taken by the officers of the Inland Revenue to test the various materials used in the manufacture of beer; to obtain a Return of the specific ingredients so used; and to ascertain to what extent, if any, they were found to be contaminated with arsenic; and whether any standard of purity in beer has been laid down by the Inland Revenue.

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.): In respect to the first three portions of the hon. Member's Question, the procedure of the Board of Inland Revenue in exercising control and inspection over the ingredients which might contain arsenic, and which are used in the manufacture of beer, is that provided for in the Revenue Act of 1888; the Revenue officials have caused frequent samples to be taken of other ingredients than those specially mentioned in the *Gazette* Notice of October 10th, 1901, issued under the Act named. They have tested not only glucose and "invert" sugar, but also caramel, malt, hops, and a number of brewers' worts; and, in cases where beer "regenerators" and yeast foods have been found arsenical, the manufacturer has either been cautioned, or sanction to the use of the substance has been withheld. The Arsenical Poisoning Commission bear testimony in their Report to the value of the work done by the Inland Revenue in connection with the Government Laboratory, and it will be continued as advised by the Commission. In regard to the last paragraph of the Question, the Board of Inland Revenue have no authority to prescribe a standard of purity for beer.

Financial Returns.

*Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Finance Accounts and the Statement as to the National Debt will be published.

*Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The Finance Accounts are by law required to be presented to Parliament by June 30th.

These accounts cannot be got ready for presentation much before that date. The Annual Return relating to the National Debt is in an advanced state of preparation, and I hope it will be in the hands of Members before long.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Shall we have them before the Second Reading of the Finance Bill?

*MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: That is hardly likely so far as the Finance Accounts are concerned. With regard to the Debt Return I have given instructions for that to be pushed forward as rapidly as possible.

*MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): Can we have any estimate of the proposed capital expenditure before the Second Reading?

*MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I am afraid I cannot give more details than I did in my Budget speech, but if I find I can do so I will.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Why does it require three months to prepare these accounts? I think we had them in May last year.

*MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I am afraid I cannot answer that, but if the hon. Gentleman wishes I will inquire of the Department from which I get the information.

Grants to University Colleges.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, in view of the fact that the grants to University Colleges, *i.e.*, to London, Victoria, Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool, and to Scotch and Welsh Universities have increased from £27,000 in 1903–4 to £54,000 in 1904–5, and to £100,000 in 1905–6, he can state how the sum voted has been allocated as between the different colleges; and if any equivalent grant has been made to any Irish colleges.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.): I would refer the hon. Member to the reply given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on March 22nd† last, in which he stated that the increase of grants to Universities and University Colleges, Great Britain, was the first approach to an equivalent grant to England as compared with the other portions of the three kingdoms. There is, therefore, no intention of increasing the grants to Irish colleges. Scotland and Wales are unaffected by the increase. The allocation of the Votes for 1903–4 and 1904–5 will be found set out in Parliamentary Paper Cd. 2422 of 1905. The distribution for 1905–6 has not yet been settled.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Why is not the allocation of these grants set out in the Appropriation Accounts?

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: They are set out in the Paper I have referred to.

Motor-Car Speed Regulations.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, having regard to the increasing number of accidents arising from excessive speed and reckless driving of motor-cars and cycles, and to the habitual violation of the legal speed limits, he will take immediate steps to strengthen the law and to secure its effective enforcement.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. GRANT LAWSON, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk): In the unavoidable absence of my right hon. friend may I be permitted to read his reply?—I have seen with much regret the reports of several recent accidents caused by motor-cars and motor-cycles. Reckless and inconsiderate driving should certainly be stopped, and I may point out that under the Motor-Car Act, 1903, it is an offence to drive a motor-car in a public highway recklessly or negligently or at a speed or in a manner which is dangerous to the public. Offences under the Act are punishable by fine and suspension of licence, and in the case of a second or subsequent offence by imprisonment, and I should hope that magistrates will impose penalties sufficiently deterrent to put an end to the evil, without its being necessary to resort to further legislation on the subject.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxliii., 791.

Mr. CHANNING: Do I understand that the Local Government Board are not prepared to consider at present questions of further legislation and stronger regulations? It seems to me they are imperatively demanded.

Mr. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): May I ask whether the hon. Gentleman will take steps to reconsider the circular issued by the Local Government Board directly taking away the power of local authorities to regulate traffic in their own district?

Mr. GRANT LAWSON: I do not know what the hon. Gentleman refers to.

Mr. CATHCART WASON: The one issued by the Local Government Board.

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: That question does not arise here.

Alien Chauffeurs.

Mr. SCOTT-MONTAGU (Hampshire, New Forest): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, seeing that aliens asking for driving licences under The Motor-Car Act, 1903, cannot be required to produce references from the police authorities of the countries from which they have come or their driving licences issued by such countries, the Government will give facilities for its progress if a short Bill to give licensing authorities powers as to aliens applying for licences is introduced.

Mr. GRANT LAWSON: I am afraid that it would be difficult to distinguish between various classes of applicants for licences to drive motor-cars. If a Bill is introduced it will receive consideration, but I cannot state beforehand what course the Government will adopt with regard to it.

Local Authorities and Motor-Car Regulations.

Mr. CAWLEY (Lancashire, Prestwich): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will state how many local authorities have applied for power to fix a speed limit for motor-cars within their areas; and how many of those applications have been granted.

Mr. GRANT LAWSON: The Local Government Board have received applications under Sections 8 and 9 of the Motor-Car Act, 1903, from forty-five local authorities. Seventeen of these applications have been withdrawn and several more are in abeyance. In twelve cases local inquiries have been held by inspectors of the Board, and in two instances orders have been issued, limiting the speed to five miles an hour as respects part of a highway on which ordinary motor-car traffic would in the opinion of the Board be especially dangerous.

Mr. CATHCART WASON: May I put my Question here as to the circular issued by the Local Government Board?

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I think notice had better be given of the Question.

Local Taxation Accounts.

Mr. BENN (Devonport): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been directed to the fact that the Local Taxation Accounts issued by the Local Government Board do not show the local taxation receipts and expenditure of the several parishes, boroughs, and counties of the kingdom; and, inasmuch as such information cannot be obtained from the accounts by any ordinary examination of them, will he undertake to revise the form of the Local Taxation Accounts so as to bring them more into consonance with their title.

Mr. GRANT LAWSON: The last issued Local Taxation Returns relate to the receipts and expenditure of all the local authorities in England and Wales, some 28,000 in number. As regards the principal classes of authorities, the Returns give details of the amounts received and expended by each authority, but I am afraid it would not be practicable to show in them the amounts received and expended in respect of each of the 14,800 parishes. I am not sure, however, that I rightly understand what is the precise suggestion which the hon. Member wishes to make, but if he thinks fit to communicate fuller particulars of it to the Local Government Board, it will receive consideration.

Motor-Car Fatalities at Easter.

Mr. LAMBERT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been drawn to the sacrifice of human life at Easter, caused by the recklessness of motor-car drivers; and whether he will issue directions to the police to rigorously enforce the present law.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's): I do not know what are the cases which the hon. Member has in mind, but I have no information which would lead me to suppose that the police anywhere neglect the duty of enforcing the law as to motor-cars.

Reckless Driving of Motor Cars.

Mr. LAMBERT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will issue a Circular pointing out to the magistrates that a fine to the owner of a motor-car is but a trifling deterrent, and suggesting that even for first offences reckless driving should be punished by imprisonment.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I do not think that Section 11 of the Act of 1903 contemplates imprisonment for a first offence, though its language may be slightly ambiguous; but in any event I do not think it would be right to attempt to prescribe to magistrates how they should exercise a discretion which Parliament has entrusted to them. I have no reason to doubt that they are fully alive to the necessity of enforcing the law.

Mr. LAMBERT: Will the right hon. Gentleman consider an amendment of the law to clear up the ambiguity of the Act?

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: The Act is a temporary one. I am always obtaining information which will be useful when any extension of the Act is required.

Mr. SCOTT-MONTAGU: Are there not very severe penalties which can be enforced?

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: If notice is given of any Question I will endeavour to obtain the information asked for.

Motor-Car Traffic between Hyde Park Corner and Kew Bridge.

Captain DONELAN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what authority regulates motor-car traffic between Hyde Park Corner and Kew Bridge; what is the maximum speed permitted by the regulations; and what steps are taken to enforce obedience to the regulations.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: The Metropolitan Police control motor-car traffic between Hyde Park Corner and Kew Bridge. The maximum speed permissible is twenty miles an hour, as provided by Section 9 of the Act of 1903. The police take action against persons who infringe that section or Section 1, which prohibits the driving of a car to the common danger.

Captain DONELAN asked whether the existing conditions were to prevail until more children were murdered.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Are we to understand that motor-cars may actually drive at twenty miles an hour between Hyde Park Corner and Kew Bridge?

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I am prepared to make the fullest inquiry into the matter if the hon. Member will put a Question on the Paper.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: This is a question of speed. Are they allowed to go at twenty miles an hour at this place?

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: Twenty miles is the maximum.

Sir JOHN GORST (Cambridge University) asked over what part of the route between Hyde Park Corner and Kew Bridge a car could be driven at twenty miles an hour without common danger.

MR. CAWLEY: Was the London County Council refused permission to regulate the traffic at a lower speed than twenty miles an hour?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: That really does not arise out of the Question. In answer to my right hon. friend, I would say that there are hours of the day and night when a car can safely go at a higher speed than at other times.

MR. CHANNING: Are these regulations made by the Home Office?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I must ask for notice of further Questions. I have every desire to give all the information I can, but I do not want to do it by way of chance Answers to supplementary Questions.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: But I distinctly asked in my Question what authority regulates the motor traffic at this spot?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: The Metropolitan Police.

Motor-Car Casualties.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will grant a Return showing the number and nature of the casualties caused by motor-cars in Great Britain and Ireland from 1st May, 1904, to 30th April, 1905.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I cannot promise to give this Return. As I have explained to the hon. and gallant Member, I can only obtain these figures for the Metropolitan Police District. In that district most, if not all, serious motor-car accidents come to the notice of the police. In the areas of provincial forces many very likely do not, and even if the police keep records of such accidents, those records would probably be incomplete. But I am willing to make inquiry as to whether records of accidents are kept by provincial forces, and whether, if so, they are likely to be sufficiently accurate to make them worth obtaining. It will also be necessary to inquire whether the figures could be furnished by the Scottish and Irish Offices. I am very anxious to give all the information possible, and I have no desire whatever to keep back information.

MR. SCOTT-MONTAGU: Will the right hon. Gentleman incorporate in those figures the number of accidents arising from horse-drawn vehicles?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: No, I do not think that is relevant.

Police and Cyclists on the Brighton Road.

MR. CAWLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to a notice (in the Press) that a band of cyclists have been engaged on the Brighton Road to warn cyclists travelling at an illegal speed of the presence of the police; and whether, in view of the law against illegal conspiracy, he proposes to take any steps in the matter.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: This matter is entirely one for the county police, and from the newspaper cuttings with which the hon. Member has kindly furnished me, it appears that they are quite prepared to deal with it. I see no ground for any action on my part.

Flogging in Civil Prisons.

MR. TOMKINSON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many cases of corporal punishment by flogging for offences against discipline there have been in all civil prisons during the year 1904.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: In local prisons there were eighteen corporal punishments during the year 1904. In convict prisons there were nine.

MR. TOMKINSON: How does that compare with previous years?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: It is considerably less.

The Aliens Bill—Victims of Religious Persecution.

SIR E. DURNING-LAWRENCE (Cornwall, Truro): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the immunity under the Aliens Bill granted to those aliens fleeing from political persecution also covers those fleeing from religious persecution.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I fear I cannot add anything to the Answer which I gave yesterday† to a Question from the hon. Member for Mile End; which was that, as the Bill is worded, this would depend on the facts of each individual case; but that whether further definition is necessary is a question that can be discussed on the Amendments already on the Paper.

International Conference on Agriculture.

Mr. CHANNING: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether His Majesty's Government or the Board of Agriculture will be officially represented at the International Conference on Agriculture at Rome; if so, whether such official representatives will be instructed only to watch and report suggestions made for international action as regards agricultural questions; and whether, in any case, any official representatives will be instructed not to commit this country to proposals involving any form of joint international control over matters affecting the interest of British agriculturists.

*The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of AGRICULTURE (Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes, Huntingdonshire, Ramsey): The Answer to all three Questions is in the affirmative.

London Port and Docks.

Mr. BENN: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been directed to the proposed expenditure by the Belgian Government of some £6,000,000 to £8,000,000 upon the improvement of the Port of Antwerp; and, in the event of such expenditure, what proposals he has to make to similarly improve the port and retain the trade of London.

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Bonar Law, Glasgow, Blackfriars): I am afraid I can add nothing to the Answer to the supplemental Question put by the hon. Member on March 23rd‡, namely, that the Government is not prepared to make any proposals this session.

Normanton Postal Arrangements.

Mr. PARROTT (Yorkshire, W.R., Normanton): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he will make, or cause to be made, inquiries with respect to the necessity for additional or improved postal facilities for the Common, Normanton, Yorkshire.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton): I will have inquiry made on this subject.

Telephone Agreement.

Dr. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the importance of a full inquiry into the proposed Telephone Agreement, and the fact that the Committee has not yet been appointed, he will take steps to suspend the clause making the completion of the purchase automatic.

Lord STANLEY: No, Sir. It is not in my power to modify the agreement which I have signed.

Scotland and the Agricultural Rates Act.

Mr. BLACK (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Lord-Advocate whether his attention has been called to the fact that the method of distribution of the grant-in-aid adopted in the Agricultural Rates Act results in some parishes receiving more than sufficient to compensate them for the loss of assessable rental of agricultural land, brought about by the operation of the Act, while in other parishes the amount received falls short of what is required, with the result that the burden on non-agricultural ratepayers is increased; and will the Government take steps to remedy the inequality.

*The LORD-ADVOCATE (Mr. Scott Dickson, Glasgow, Bridgton.): My attention has been called to the facts on which the hon. Member's Question is based. I am, however, unable to give any undertaking as to the introduction of amending legislation.

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† See Page 814.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cxliii., 956.

Irish National Board of Education—New Rules.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has satisfied himself during the recess in Ireland of the opposition to the new rule recently issued by the National Board of Education; and whether he proposes to enforce it or to cause it to be withdrawn.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): Rules 127 (b) and 186 were reconsidered by the Commissioners at their meeting held on Friday last. Modifications of the rules were proposed by one of the Commissioners, the Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin. These modifications were unanimously agreed to by the Board, and will be communicated forthwith to the Treasury for approval.

The Irish Estates Commissioners.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland why the Estates Commissioners were prevented from establishing a special department for the management and improvement of estates purchased by them, for the purchase of untenanted land and the reinstatement of evicted tenants; and whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the correspondence between the Estates Commissioners and the Treasury which resulted in the issue of instructions to the Commissioners to confine their inquiries to estates before them for sale, and to Plan of Campaign estates or to other estates similarly situated when evictions were not due to ordinary causes but to the land war.

MR. WALTER LONG: The Estates Commissioners have no power to establish a separate department, properly so-called, for the performance of this or any other work, nor did they ever seek to establish such a department. But they have power to assign certain portions of their work to specified members of their staff, and this they have done with the sanction of the Treasury, given on the 23rd June, 1904. There was no correspondence on the subject between the Estates Commissioners and the Treasury, but communications in writing took place between the Irish Executive and the Estates Commissioners in reference to the matter. These were Departmental confidential communications, which I must decline to produce.

Reinstatement of Evicted Tenants in Ireland.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that the promises in reference to the reinstatement of evicted tenants in Ireland, made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover during the debate on the Land Act of 1903, have not been redeemed, only 137 evicted tenants having been restored up to December 31st, 1904, out of 4,275 who applied; whether the Irish Government propose to take any, and, if so, what steps to expedite the work of restoration.

MR. WALTER LONG: Section 2 provides that, on the sale of an estate, advances may be made for the purchase of parcels of land for the purpose, amongst others, of providing farms for evicted tenants. My right hon. friend the Member for Dover stated that the reinstatement of evicted tenants was ancillary to the sale of estates. This I am advised is the correct view; and as sales proceed the matter will be dealt with. It is not intended to introduce legislation.

MR. DILLON: Is the right hon. Gentleman not aware that the right hon. Member for Dover gave a distinct pledge that the work of reinstatement would be carried on quite independently?

MR. WALTER LONG: I have examined very carefully the various statements made by my right hon. friend, and I find that the statement I make is accurate—namely, that the primary object of the Act of 1903 is the transfer of land from the owner to the occupier, but that, ancillary to that, every effort would be made to reinstate the evicted tenants.

MR. DILLON: Has the right hon. Gentleman's attention been drawn to a letter from the Estates Commissioners to himself undertaking to institute proceedings in certain districts for the reinstatement of evicted tenants without regard to the sale of estates?

MR. WALTER LONG: I am not quite sure I have seen that letter. But I repeat it cannot be doubted that the question of the reinstatement of evicted tenants was to be regarded as ancillary to the primary object of the Bill—the transfer of land from the owner to the occupier.

Instructions of the Estates Commissioners to their Inspectors.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland why the instructions issued by the Estates Commissioners to their inspectors, in February, 1904, should be treated as confidential any more than those which have been communicated to the House; who is responsible for drafting the instructions to the inspectors of the Estates Commissioners issued in February, 1905; and did the Estates Commissioners approve of the alterations made by the instructions of February, 1905, as compared with the instructions of February, 1904.

MR. DILLON: I beg further to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland by whose authority the instructions given to the inspectors of the Estates Commissioners in February, 1904, to regard the provisional agreements made between landlords and tenants on estates offered to the Commissioners as only one of the means by which the prices which the tenants would be willing to pay could be ascertained, were altered into an instruction that these provisional agreements were to be taken as conclusive evidence of the tenant's willingness to buy at the prices mentioned therein; and were the Commissioners assenting parties to this alteration.

MR. WALTER LONG: The first instructions were framed when the Act had only been in operation a short time, and were merely provisional, tentative, and informal. The instructions of 1905, which were based on the experience that had been gained, were drafted by the Estates Commissioners and submitted to the Lord-Lieutenant for revision. I have no information upon the last point raised in the Question, and, even if I had, as the Commissioners are under the general control of the Lord-Lieutenant in respect of these administrative matters, I do not think I could enter into the question as to whether they approved of the action of the Lord-Lieutenant.

MR. DILLON: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the point of the Question, why the instructions issued in 1904 under which the Act was worked for a whole year should be treated as confidential while those issued in 1905 have been laid on the Table?

MR. WALTER LONG: I have answered the Question to the best of my ability. The original instructions were in the nature of confidential communications passing from one branch to another.

MR. DILLON: The right hon. Gentleman entirely misapprehends the Question. These could not be in the nature of confidential communications. They are the instructions issued in February, 1904, under which the Act was worked for a whole year. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Order!"] It is necessary for me to explain the Question at length.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: If every hon. Member explained his Question the time allotted for Questions would soon be exhausted.

MR. WALTER LONG: If the hon. Member is not satisfied perhaps he will put another Question down.

MR. DILLON: I will put the same Question down again.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Can the right hon Gentleman say why, having put on the Table the instructions to inspectors which have been in operation during the last few months, he refuses to give those under which the Act was worked for more than a year?

MR. WALTER LONG: I have already answered that Question. I have said the original instructions were of a Departmental character and should be treated as confidential.

MR. DILLON: I still adhere to my statement that the right hon. Gentleman has not answered my Question.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland who was responsible for the interpretation of the law now acted upon in regard to inquiries of inspectors in relation to the equity of the price under Section 5 of The Irish Land Act, 1903; and why were the instructions to inspectors issued in February, 1904, altered in this respect while the whole question of the interpretation of this section had been referred to the Judicial Commissioner for a decision.

MR. WALTER LONG: The Estates Commissioners are in the first instance responsible for the interpretation of any section of the Act affecting any case coming before them, with this qualification, that they are bound, if requested by any person interested, to refer any question of law to the decision of the Judicial Commissioner, and may, of their own motion, do so if they desire his guidance. They have, I understand, availed themselves of this latter power, and have referred the interpretation of this section to Mr. Justice Meredith. The matter now awaits his decision.

MR. DILLON: Why is it that the matter has not been allowed to await the decision of the Judge, but that in the new regulations now laid upon the Table of the House it is prejudged by the Executive?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Why during twelve months of the working of this Act were the inspectors instructed by the Estates Commissioners to take all the equities under Section 5 into account; why in a new instruction have they been instructed not to consider the equity affecting the tenant but only the equity affecting the remainder-man and the encumbrancers. I want to know upon whose advice that has been done, whether it has been done by the Lord-Lieutenant or whether it has been done by the Law Officers of the Crown, and why they did not await Mr. Justice Meredith's decision on that point?

MR. WALTER LONG: It is really very difficult to answer a Question of this kind, because the hon. Gentleman knows perfectly well that he is putting a question of a strictly legal character and extremely technical, and one which I say with great respect might have been put on the Paper, and not asked in this way. My Answer, however, is this: In the original instructions to the inspectors, as I understand the situation, the Estates Commissioners acted on their own responsibility. They required guidance. They are under a double responsibility—the first is to refer questions to their legal adviser, the second is to act under the direction of the Lord-Lieutenant. It was held that their views in one aspect of the question [MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Held by whom?]—held by the Executive—that their views were not a correct interpretation of the law. If that view is wrong it is quite obvious that it should be rectified.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Well, now I ask the Attorney-General whether he did not state in this House that the Law Officers of the Crown had given no opinion and no advice to the Estates Commissioners on this or on any other question.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER pointed out that the hon. Member was not in order in referring back to previous replies.

The Estates Commissioners and the Lord-Lieutenant.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the allusion in the Report of the Estates Commissioners to the instructions received from time to time from the Lord-Lieutenant, and to the statement that their proceedings have to a large extent been controlled by these instructions; and whether, in view of this statement, he will communicate these instructions to the House.

Mr. WALTER LONG: This Question has already been answered. No such regulations as are mentioned in Section 23, Sub-section 8, have ever been framed. My right hon. friend the Member for Dover evidently thought it premature to do so until some experience had been gained. He stated, however, in an Answer given in the House, that communications of a Departmental and confidential character had passed between him and the Commissioners. Formal regulations are now being framed, and I propose, as promised, to lay them on the Table of the House immediately after certain questions now pending before Mr. Justice Meredith have been decided.

Mr. DILLON asked why the communications which controlled the Estates Commissioners in many respects in administering the Act during the last eighteen months would not be communicated to the House.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Well, I think they were informal. It seems to me to be the most convenient time, both for the hon. Gentleman and for those who have to defend the Executive, to discuss them when they are before the House.

Afforestry in Ireland.

Captain DONELAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is proposed to take any steps with a view to preserve the few woods and plantations still left standing in Ireland.

Mr. WALTER LONG: I am making inquiry into this matter, and would ask the hon. Member to defer the Question for a few days.

Irish Poor Law Surgical Contracts.

Mr. O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the grounds on which the Local Government Board refused to sanction the acceptance by several Poor Law Boards in the West of Ireland of the tenders for the supply of surgical appliances of Messrs. Adamson and Co., Ballina, seeing that this firm had already been in the past contractors for similar goods to several of these unions, and carried out their contracts in every case with satisfaction; and if he will state why, having excluded Messrs. Adamson's tenders in several western unions, the Local Government Board has sanctioned their tender in the Ballina Union.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Board refused, in the first instance, to recognise this firm as qualified to contract for a number of unions because it did not comply with the requirements of the regulations. The firm subsequently undertook to comply with the regulations, and the Board have allowed it to contract for a proportion of the unions referred to, including Ballina. The Board were unable, however, to allow the firm to contract for the remaining unions for which it tendered, as they were satisfied it could not adequately perform the contracts.

Clogher Valley Postal Arrangements.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called by resolutions passed by district councils and by other means to the want of postal facilities in the Clogher Valley district, county Tyrone; whether it would be possible to arrange for a supplementary mail by Greenore and Holyhead, and thus give traders the opportunity of answering letters on the day of receipt thereof.

Lord STANLEY: I am making inquiries with regard to increased postal facilities in the Clogher Valley district, and hope to communicate the result of these inquiries to the hon. Member within the course of the next few days.

Ballina Post Office Medical Officer.

Mr. O'KELLY: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he will state whether any decision has yet been come to in connection with the appointment of a medical officer to the staff of the Ballina Post Office, county Mayo; and, if a decision has been come to and it is proposed to attach a medical officer to the staff in that office, when an appointment is likely to be made.

Lord STANLEY: I have the matter under consideration, and I hope to make an appointment very soon.

Vacant Lordship of the Treasury.

MR. DALZIEL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether there is a vacancy in the Junior Lordship of the Treasury: and, if so, can he state what is the cause of the delay in filling up the appointment.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The matter is under consideration.

The Vote of Censure Debate.

MR. DILLON asked whether the Prime Minister was aware that an understanding prevailed to the effect that the vote of censure debate should not be taken before Tuesday. It would be very inconvenient to many Irish Members if it were taken before that day. The Leader of the Irish Party had not been communicated with on the subject, and had left the House under the impression that it would not be taken before Tuesday. Would the right hon. Member for Dover be present on Monday or Tuesday, and, if not, would the Prime Minister consider the desirableness of postponing the debate until the late Chief Secretary could be present?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not aware of any understanding as to this debate. My right hon. friend near me (Sir A. Acland-Hood) informs me that, while he has no definite recollection of any explicit engagement, it is possible that from something which had fallen from him the impression had been gathered that Tuesday was the day when the debate would take place.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: The arrangement was that the debate should not be taken before Tuesday.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: In these circumstances I shall certainly not rigidly adhere to the arrangement which has been indicated to the House. If it is agreeable to the right hon. Gentleman opposite I will substitute Tuesday for Monday. In that case I shall take the Second Reading of the Scottish Education Bill on Monday and the vote of censure on Tuesday. I have every reason to hope that the late Chief Secretary will be in his place on Tuesday, as I have already said that my right hon. friend would be here on Monday. I have no reason to doubt that.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I have no objection either to Monday or Tuesday. I understand from my right hon. friends near me that the impression is confirmed of an understanding more or less precise that the debate would not be taken until Tuesday.

The East Ham Education Difficulty.

MR. ERNEST GRAY (West Ham N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is now in a position to state what policy he proposes to adopt with respect to the refusal of the East Ham Council to administer the Education Act, 1902.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I recognise the importance of the question to which my hon. friend refers, but I do not think that it is possible for me to deal with it satisfactorily by Question and Answer across the floor of the House.

ADJOURNMENT.

MR. ERNEST GRAY, Member for West Ham (North Division), rose in his place, and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, viz., "The refusal of the Council of the Borough of East Ham to administer the Education Act, 1902, as from the 31st instant, the prospect of other local authorities adopting at once a similar decision, and the policy of the Government in respect thereto;" but the pleasure of the House not having been signified, MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than forty Members having accordingly risen.

The Motion stood over, under Standing Order No. 10, until the Evening Sitting, this day.

STANDING COMMITTEES (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL).

Mr. John Edward Ellis reported from the Chairmen's Panel; That they had appointed Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in the place of Mr. John Edward Ellis.

Report to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILLS.

RESIDENT MAGISTRATES (BELFAST) BILL.

"To make provision for the appointment and remuneration of Resident Magistrates in Belfast," presented by Mr. Wolff; supported by Sir James Haslett, Mr. Sloan, Mr. Charles Craig, and Mr. T. L. Corbett; to be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 200.]

WINTER ASSIZES (IRELAND) BILL.

"To extend the jurisdiction of Winter Assizes in Ireland," presented by Mr. Wolff; supported by Sir James Haslett, Mr. Sloan, Mr. Charles Craig, and Mr. Thomas Corbett; to be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 201.]

SUPPLY [5th Allotted Day].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. Jeffreys (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1905-6.

Class I.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £31,700, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for the Houses of Parliament Buildings."

Mr. HARWOOD (Bolton) said he wished to call attention to the miserable social accommodation provided for Members of the House. They often heard it said that the House was one of the best clubs in the world. He had not very much experience of clubs, but he was inclined to think it was one of the worst, and that there was not a third-rate club in London with so large a membership which would be able to keep its doors open if it provided such poor accommodation as Members of Parliament had to put up with. The Committee must remember the large number of Members who were compelled to be in attendance for long hours. It was not like an ordinary club where Members ran in for an hour or two, but there they had to stay very often for eight or ten hours consecutively, and under those circumstances he submitted that the accommodation set apart for them was an absolute scandal. Take the case of the reading-room. It was absurd to call it a room at all. It was merely a passage, and those who used it had to choose between being scorched by a fire or frozen by cold winds. There was only sitting accommodation for about twenty Members in it. Perhaps it was thought they ought not to be encouraged to read the newspapers, although one would have supposed it was their duty to do so. At any rate many were very fond of going to that place to read the reports of their own speeches, with the result that they were often in a state of semi-asphyxiation, they were suffocated by the bad atmosphere, while those who sat near the window were subjected to cold draughts and had the additional disadvantage of having their feet continually kicked by passers-by. And this was the place where Members of the House of Commons were supposed to study that great guide of public opinion, the Press. It was really most unreasonable that things should remain in this condition, and it was quite time something was done to remedy it. Then there was the smoking-room. The windows of that room looked into a backyard, and the place was more of a playroom than a smoking-room. He was very fond of smoking himself, but he was bound to confess it was a most uncomfortable room, and one could not sit down there calmly and quietly, smoke a pipe, and read a book as one would like to.

It might be said that all this was inevitable because of the Gothic character of the building, but he could not admit that. Some years ago there was a change in the *personnel* of the House, and one of the official residences was surrendered. He then appealed to the First Commissioner of Works for more accommodation for Members, and although it was admitted that the existing accommodation was quite inadequate, he got nothing but that sympathy which buttered no parsnips. Improvements were promised, but nothing was done, and when extra rooms were acquired they were given up to Members whom he need not name. It was obvious, in the first place, that the tea-room should be enlarged, and he thought that the passage, miscalled the reading-room, might with advantage be thrown into the tea-room. Then they wanted a reading-room—a decent room which would not disgrace a second-rate club; and he thought they had a right to ask for one looking out on to the Terrace, one with a light and cheerful aspect, where they need not be either grilled by the fire, frozen by the wind, or have their feet kicked by passers-by. It might be said that he was asking for luxuries, but it was time that Members stood up for themselves. The habits of the House had changed since the days of Pitt, and Members now stopped longer in and about the House. There was good speaking in those days; but now hon. Members were compelled either to listen to speaking that was not good or to wander about the desolate precincts of the Chamber without a place to rest the soles of their feet. The Government were anxious to have a good attendance of their supporters; but how could they expect diligence in such miserable conditions? There were limits to the calls that could be made on a man's patriotism. If the Government wished their followers to attend properly they should see that decent provision was made for the moderate comforts of gentlemen. Membership of the House was like marriage according to the definition of Socrates—a condition which every one outside wanted to be in and every one inside wanted to be out of. Unless something were done to bring the accommodation of the House up to the level of decent modern requirements there would be a deterioration in the character of the Members. The discontent was very widespread. The occupants of the Front Benches had comfortable rooms in which they could luxuriate, but the ordinary Member had a wretched time, not knowing what to do or where to go.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A (New Works, Alterations, and Additions) be reduced by £100."—(*Mr. Harwood.*)

*MR. WYLIE (Dumbartonshire) said he also had given notice of a Motion to reduce the Vote, because he wanted once again to discuss the question of the ventilation and sanitation of the House of Commons. Many hon. Members might think it faddism on his part to raise this question year after year, and he would therefore like to point out that on this occasion his criticisms would be founded upon the recent report of Dr. Gordon, an eminent sanitarian, who had examined into the sanitation and ventilation of the House of Commons Chamber. He would like first, however, to associate himself to a considerable extent with the remarks which had fallen from the hon. Member opposite with regard to the inadequacy of the accommodation provided for Members, and he would suggest to the noble Lord the Member for Chorley, the desirability of placing ventilating fans in the dining-rooms. They were now in common use in many clubs and hotels and they certainly added to the comfort of the users of the rooms. But his main object in rising was to deal with the insanitary condition of the Chamber itself.

He admitted that there had been an enormous improvement in that matter in the last few years. The ordinary cleansing of the House was now carried on in a thorough and systematic manner, and, while he would take that opportunity of expressing to the hon. Member for Chorley his gratitude for the able and enthusiastic manner in which he had grappled with this question, he would like to point out that there were still two or three radical defects. There was, for instance, a very unequal distribution of air in the

Chamber, and the system of forcing the air up through the floor was, in his opinion, radically wrong, for it caused strong draughts at places and subjected the Members to very great discomfort. Again, also on the authority of Dr. Gordon, the air was altogether too dry, and, whereas the proper amount of humidity in an inhabited room was from 73 to 75 degrees, in the House of Commons it was only 63 degrees. The system of heating it was absolutely wrong. The air was desiccated by steam-pipes and a certain amount of humidity was forced into it by artificial means. In ordinary mansions it was usual to heat the air by hot-water pipes which extracted from it less humidity and allowed it to pass into the room in very much its natural state. But steam-pipes were in vogue in that House, and he had been surprised to learn that there was one in the cotton-wool filter under the Speaker's Chair, which must add very considerably to the discomfort of Mr. Speaker during the long debates that went on in the House. Then the occupants of the Treasury Bench were subjected to a steam-heated atmosphere to an excessive degree; indeed on the Ministerial side of the House the Members were in a worse position than those on the Opposition Benches in this respect, and he hoped hon. Members opposite would bear that fact in mind whenever there might be any slight and unusual ebullition of temper on their part. There were also steam pipes unprotected in other parts of the House.

It was quite clear that the system of ventilation was still in a state of evolution. He was somewhat in favour of the downward system of ventilation. In one of the parishes of the constituency which he had the honour to represent, they had a population which was growing more rapidly than that of any other part of Scotland, and he was glad to know that the municipal and school authorities had risen to the occasion and with great public spirit and much liberality had fitted some of their public buildings with improved ventilating apparatus. The Town Hall at Clyde Bank had been fitted with overhead ventilators at a cost of £3,000 and one of the schools had also been treated in the same way, and he had been in both buildings at periods when they were filled by members of the artisan class, and he had found that in each case the ventilation was far superior to that of the House of Commons. He heartily concurred with Dr. Gordon that some better system of ventilation should be provided for that Chamber, and, although he was aware that a Committee which had investigated the subject had reported against the overhead system, he did think the matter was one well worth reconsideration in the light of modern improvements.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.) said he also desired to make a complaint in connection with the question of the amenities of the House. He had brought the matter before the noble Lord on several occasions, and had received a promise that it should be dealt with, but nothing had been done, and it seemed as if those in authority were flouted by their subordinates. The point was a very simple one. Many Members entered the House by a door which led along the main entrance. But a large proportion happened to have their hat pegs at the other extremity of the quadrangle, and found it more convenient therefore to enter through Westminster Hall. Now, there was a door leading down some steps which adjoined the door leading into the crypt, and his suggestion was that that door should be converted into a swing door. It could easily be accomplished and would get rid of a great source of inconvenience, because Members who took their friends down to the crypt had to be very careful lest they were startled by a violent bang caused by the sudden opening of the door. Besides, those who happened to be in the cloak-room were subjected to violent draughts at the same time. He had been told that the alteration would be made during the Easter recess, then the Whitsuntide recess, and then in the autumn, but it had never been done. He should like to know why. Half the time of the constable, whose duty it was to attend to Members, was spent in closing that door after Members had entered or left. He believed the alteration was not made because some subordinate official objected to it. He meant, however, that it should be done, and he asked the noble Lord for some explanation why it had not been executed.

Sir J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.) said he thought the time was approaching when the principal arrangements for the ventilation of the House should be made so as not to injure the health of hon. Members who were getting past their best. The ventilation was conducted in a most uncertain and unpleasant manner. The other night, when the temperature fell very much, the electric fans were kept running the whole night and the discomfort was very great. Then the windows for years past had been covered at night with thick curtains, preventing the air coming through the panes of glass in a natural way, and the result was that the atmosphere of the House of Commons became extremely oppressive. He could not conceive why that should be done.

Mr. BRIGG (Yorkshire, W.R. Keighley) said he wished to complain of the insufficient accommodation in the post office within the building. The number of letters received by Members, not only from their constituents, but from enterprising tradesmen, was rapidly increasing. A short time ago the number of letters received was 2,890; yesterday it reached 5,000, and to-morrow it would, in all probability, be 6,000. The officials did their very best; they were exceedingly obliging and courteous; but there were times when Members could not get to the window of the post office to make inquiries. Some improvement would have to be made. Over the post office there was a room now vacant which might be utilised; or the steps which led Members from another part of the House might be removed and the space made available for additional accommodation. Then why should not each Member be provided with a small locker or pigeonhole for his letters, with his own name upon it, as he had seen in other Legislative Chambers abroad? He knew that the Post Office officials were anxious that something should be done to improve the accommodation, and he hoped that the First Commissioner of Works would pay attention to this matter.

Sir GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said that whenever this subject of the ventilation of the House came up there were complaints that it was defective. He himself could not complain, and it seemed to him that the Chamber was very well ventilated. Some said that it was too hot, and some that it was too cold. It largely depended on the age of hon. Members. What he complained of was that they were getting more and more luxurious and wanted more money spent on these luxuries. He had no objection to these luxuries in themselves, but he drew attention to the cost. Session after session there were complaints, especially from the opposite side of the House, about the continual growth of the Civil Service Estimates, and yet here, on Class I. of these Estimates, Members were clamouring for more expenditure. He had looked into this matter in the library and found that ten years ago the expenditure on the fabric of the House was £37,000 and it was now £47,000, or an increase of 30 per cent. If a similar increase were made over the whole Civil Service Estimates it would mean an increase of £3,000,000. In the previous ten years the expenditure on the maintenance of the Houses of Parliament was £32,000 and now it was £47,000. When the country was crying out that the Government was spending too much, the House should show an example of a little economy in the matter of their own accommodation. Upon the Houses of Parliament buildings the expenditure this year was returned at £3,800 as against £800 ten years ago and £400 twenty years ago. Then the present year's expenditure on warming and ventilation was shown at £27,000 whereas the figures ten years ago were £15,000 and twenty years ago £13,000. Those figures showed that the expenditure upon the Houses of Parliament had been doubled in the last twenty years. He was not averse to comfort and luxury, and he acknowledged that the tea and reading-rooms were not everything that could be desired, but inasmuch as the expenditure of the country was increasing by leaps and bounds, he felt it his duty to protest emphatically that if hon. Members meant what they uttered about extravagance they should, instead of advocating further extravagance in these matters, economise in them and thus set an example to the country.

Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) said the hon. Member had given the House a lecture on economy, but he surely could best serve the ends of economy by voting against national extravagance. He (Mr. Emmott) supported the hon. Member for Bolton in regard to the better accommodation required in the tea and smoking-rooms, and he demurred to the giving up of rooms to a particular Member or official when they would be of service to the general body of Members. The circumstances of the case were somewhat new. The Whips of the Government were now nervous regarding their majority, and lately there had been, on that account, more overcrowding than at any time during the five or six years he had been in the House. The position might not be improved in the next Government, because if the Liberals were returned with a large majority it would mean a body of hon. Gentlemen earnest in their work, and they would be unable to find a writing table at which to sit. This was not a matter of minor consideration, but had to do with the health of Members and with enabling them to conduct their work with efficiency.

Mr. MILDMAY (Devonshire, Totnes) called attention to the inconvenience suffered by hon. Members in the lobbies whilst waiting to take part in a division, and asked that some improvement should be made in respect of the closing of the outer and inner doors.

Major SEELY (Isle of Wight) doubted whether the hon. Member for North Islington was justified in his appeal to the House to study economy upon this expenditure, seeing that there had been a positive decrease in this year's Estimate for new works, alterations, and additions. He would suggest that the hon. Member should preach and practise economy in matters where a million of money might be saved, and should support the Opposition when they voted in favour of real economies. Personally he would like to ask for a little more fresh air in the House. They never had an open window except on hot summer days. The present system of ventilation was entirely out of date and was most unhealthy. Thousands of pounds had been spent by hospitals upon similar systems of ventilation, but resource had eventually to be had to the open-window school. With more open windows hon. Members would be better both in health and temper than they were under the obsolete system of forcing the air into the House through a subterranean chamber with its bacteriological surroundings.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) agreed with the last speaker as to the desirability of having more fresh air in the House, and thought good service would be done if the noble Lord would walk round the galleries of the House, break every window, and leave them broken. He entirely agreed with the views of the hon. Member for North Islington as to the impropriety—not to say indecency—of this House, which was pledged to economy, discussing the Civil Service Estimates by proposals to increase them. This increase of luxuries was a modern innovation. It was often stated that speeches were better in olden times than now. That was possibly due to the fact that a larger number of speeches was now made by the occupants of the bench below him. In the time of Pitt, when the speeches were good, the accommodation of the House was bad. Ministers had no private rooms with beautifully upholstered furniture, nor was there any dining accommodation. In those days there was no accommodation. Members had to go to Bellamy's chophouse. The last words of Pitt were not "Oh, my country," but "I think I could eat one of Bellamy's meat pies." This House was satisfied with a little dirty, unventilated chophouse in the days of the speeches. The worse the accommodation the better the speeches. A great deal of the luxury had gone where it should not have gone; it had gone not to the independent Members of the House but to the thirty-six Gentlemen who, with great honour to themselves and no doubt with great advantage to the country, sat on the Front Bench, and who, he hoped, it was not an offence to call by the ancient and honourable name of placemen. In the first place they had their offices, in which they ought to do their work, and in the second place they had the Front Bench. When not in their offices they ought to be on the Front Bench, and to give them these apartments was only to tempt them to be not in their offices, or on the Front Bench, but reclining in those gorgeous saloons. The result of all this was disastrous; the more accommodation provided the less the Ministers were seen in the House. As a matter of fact, they only saw two heroic survivors on the burning wreck—the Secretary to the Treasury and the noble Lord who looked after the ventilation of this House. But the reason of that was that they had no rooms in which to recline.

If the House really desired to increase the attendance of Members, it should secure the attendance of Ministers, because, after all, Ministers were magnets and where they were their followers would be, and when Ministers were not in this House their followers went into the tea-room, the reading-room, the smoking-room, and other parts of the House. That Chamber, and that Chamber alone, was where a Member ought to be when the House was sitting, and if he could not listen to other Members speaking, then let him make a speech himself. He conceived that the House was born for the purpose of discussing the affairs of the country, and it was not, therefore, any part of its purpose to be a dining place, a species of restaurant, or a club. He had heard it was considered the finest club in London, but it was not a club and was never intended to be. The only part of the building that should be made comfortable for Members was that Chamber. Everything outside should be made as uncomfortable as possible, so that Members should be driven into the Chamber, because it was there that the work was done. If the House were better equipped with subjects of great interest to the country and to hon. Members there would be no necessity for these places outside. They ought not to be continually adding to the temptations which these places offered to Members to neglect their duty to the Chamber itself. Although this was put forward in the form of a reduction, what was really intended was extra expense. If a reduction were really intended, and they could get rid of some of these items such as the £1,500 for increased ventilation, which could be effected as he had before said by breaking the windows, he would have voted for it, but he could not vote for a reduction which was really intended to bring about an increased expenditure. There was too much luxury, too much reading, smoking, and chess. The place for Members was in the House, and the place for Ministers was on the Treasury Bench, and it was to his great regret that he saw both Ministers and Members fail in their duty.

*COLONEL WELBY (Taunton) complained of the way in which hon. Members monopolised seats in the libraries of the House by turning up chairs against the tables and keeping them in that position sometimes for the entire sitting of the House.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN pointed out that the hon. Member would not be in order in discussing that subject on this occasion.

*COLONEL WELBY said he would not pursue it. With regard to what had been said as to the want of accommodation, he desired to call attention to the fact that one library, the Speaker's library, was not used. That library contained a large number of books which were catalogued for the use of Members, but the room itself was not in the use of Members. It had been suggested by the mover of the reduction that the newspaper room should be added to the tea-room, but he himself would suggest that both the tea and the newspaper rooms should be used as reading-rooms and the library to which he had referred should be turned into a tea room. It was a spacious room and a good deal would be added to the accommodation of the Members if his suggestion was acted upon.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked the noble Lord to make a statement with regard to the present recommendations for the ventilation of the House. He pointed out that he himself was a member of a Committee which sat to consider this question three years ago. It was a question which could not be solved, as was suggested by the hon. Member for King's Lynn, by the breaking of windows. It was an extremely difficult question and one which was of vital importance to the life and health of Members of the House. That Committee reported in due course, and it was with amazement that he saw distributed with the Papers another Report, drawn up by an outsider, which in many most important particulars upset the Report of the Committee. He had no quarrel with that Report, because he agreed with some of the conclusions of the expert who had drawn it up. What he wished to know was by whose authority the expert was called in to report, and whether the money which was now to be spent was to be expended on the recommendation of the Report of the Committee or the Report of the expert. As had been pointed out the air now came into the Chamber through the floor and from under the seats. Nothing could convince him that air coming in in that way could be pure, having regard to the fact that it came up through the floor over which hon. Members walked and thus into contact with the dirt which hon. Members brought into the House on their boots. The Committee reported, on the whole, in favour of the present system, but the expert Report condemned it and called for certain changes. As to the introduction of air from under the seats, a more uncomfortable method of ventilation never entered the mind of man. Air of a temperature comfortable to sit in was extremely dangerous when it came in a violent current on one portion of the body, and it was doubly dangerous on the feet and legs. He believed it to be the source of many of the colds, headaches, and the dull oppressed feeling of which hon. Members frequently complain.

It was a most absurd and hardly sincere advocacy of economy to talk about the expense involved. Members were entitled to ask that the conditions under which they worked should be decently wholesome. He did not know whence hon. Members got their ideas of luxury, he could see no luxury in the House. A more uncomfortable place he was never in. None of them wanted luxuries, but they were entitled to such conditions as would enable them to discharge their arduous duties without unnecessary strain upon their health. The question was really a most complicated one. When he first entered Parliament, the sanitary conditions of the building would have disgraced a common lodging-house. Members were literally poisoned, and many men undoubtedly lost their lives in consequence of the scandalous and atrocious sanitary conditions, which, after many debates and at much expense, had been to some extent remedied. The conditions of the Committee rooms, were such that many men whose business forced them to attend suffered from blood-poisoning and were incapacitated for work through the state of the atmosphere. Hon. Members of long standing would remember what a punishment it used to be to serve on a Committee upstairs. It was not the fault of hon. Members that every improvement had to be dragged out of the Government and carried out at extravagant expense. Not even in the War Office was there such a system of administration as prevailed until quite recently in the House. The Legislative Chamber was controlled by three separate and independent departments, who spent most of their time in quarrelling one with another as to who should dust the walls and who the seats. Under such a system economy or efficiency was impossible. He desired to know whether the recommendations of the Ventilation Committee had been carried out, and whether there was any one man or department responsible for the general caretaking of the House and the Committee rooms. On one occasion in the present session he found the smoking-room thermometer registering 50°, and a violent draught coming through the ventilators. Young robust people accustomed to an open air life might be able to stand it, but for ordinary citizens who had passed middle life it was a different matter. He remembered once going into the smoking-room not suffering from the slightest cold, but within a quarter of an hour he was perfectly voiceless. He did not think Members of Parliament ought to be subjected to such risks. If a smoking-room with such qualities could be constructed specially for Irish Members many hon. Members might consider it a good reform, but as all Members had to share those rooms he submitted that such conditions should not be tolerated.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley) said the Office of Works were the sole authority in charge of the ventilation of the Chamber.

MR. DILLON: And the rest of the House?

LORD BALCARRES: Of the ventilation generally. The defects of which many Members had complained were not the fault of the system of ventilation; he was certain that under any other system the discomfort of hon. Members would be infinitely greater. The hon. Member for the Isle of Wight complained that the windows were always shut. If orders were given for the windows to be opened there would at once be an outcry. The Committee hardly realised the difficulty in which the Department was placed. Some Members complained when the temperature was high, others when it was low. There was a special staff constantly going about the House to regulate the temperature, and it was the endeavour of the whole staff to maintain an equable temperature throughout the day. Any Member of the House who went down with the engineer in charge and saw the system at work would probably revise his opinion if he thought the Department could be condemned off-hand. The amount of dirt which in foggy weather was intercepted under the floor and which, but for the cleansing apparatus, would come into the Chamber was enormous. It was no mere empiric system that had been adopted; it had been examined by expert after expert, and, as far as he could see, it was really a very good system and suitable for the special requirements of the case. The recommendations made in the Report of the distinguished bacteriologist Dr. Gordon were in no way incompatible with the existing system; they did not supersede it at all. The authority who asked Dr. Gordon to go into the matter was the First Commissioner of Works. The Report of the Ventilation Committee was not definite or final on certain points, and the First Commissioner thought he could not do better than have a still more careful inquiry by a professional expert to assure himself about certain points.

MR. DILLON asked if Dr. Gordon did not condemn the air coming up through the floor of the House.

LORD BALCARRES said he did not at all condemn it. It was on his advice that certain improvements had been made in that system, including a system of cleansing by passing the air through water. The First Commissioner had asked certain gentlemen to make a further inquiry of a more or less experimental character into these highly technical questions, with a view to the settlement of the ventilation problem, and he hoped to have a Report before the winter. The Committee consisted of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for London University, Professor Haldane of Oxford, and Dr. Gordon. He assured hon. Members that he did not wish to meet their criticisms in any hostile spirit, but he believed that the system they had now was the best suited for their needs. A comparison had been made with the overhead system of ventilation which had been adopted in the Town Hall at Clyde Bank at a cost of £3,000. Personally, he would rather be in the House of Commons after a twenty-four hours sitting than in the town hall at Clyde Bank. The sittings of the House of Commons were so prolonged and the facilities and the time available for cleaning after the sittings so short that they must inevitably have some system like the one they had adopted by which automatic and almost unconscious improvement of the air was going on. As to the bacteriological tests made by Dr. Gordon he ventured to say that no owner of a public hall or theatre or incumbent of a church would for a moment dare to submit his building to such a test as the House of Commons had been submitted to, unless they were prepared for a panic on the part of the audience or congregation. Under the direction of the First Commissioner of Works most careful experiments were being conducted with a view to improving the system now in vogue. It was no good asking him to make representations to the First Commissioner that there were many inconveniences in the division lobbies. He was in charge of the ventilation, but he could not alter the time-honoured system unless he knew he had got the House of Commons at his back. Once he knew that he had the support of the House of Commons in dealing with any structural alterations he would carry them out, but he could not do this upon his own responsibility. He thought the hon. Member had overstated his case altogether, for, on the contrary, his constituents believed that at the House of Commons they were rolling in luxury.

MR. HARWOOD said he complained that they were not allowed to go into the reading-room.

LORD BALCARRES said they were allowed to go into the reading-room when the House was not sitting. Hon. Members asked for more smoking-room accommodation, and better dining-room and tea-room accommodation and better writing-rooms. The First Commissioner was fully aware that these defects existed, but to remedy them was not quite so simple as hon. Members appeared to indicate. It was not a mere matter of asking for more money. If they had £100,000 to spend he was not sure that they would be able to improve the accommodation up to the requirements of the House. They did not so much want more accommodation as to have it more centralised and accessible. He did not think, however, that hon. Members made quite so much use as they might do of the accommodation that already existed. The hon. Member for Keighley raised the question of post office accommodation. There was more accommodation in the outer lobby, but that post office was eighty feet or ninety feet away. Complaint had been made about the seats in the library and the need for more writing tables. There were twenty-five writing tables on each side of the Members' Gallery upstairs, and the average number in use was one or two. As regarded smoking accommodation, no doubt the accommodation on the Terrace level had, of recent years, been largely improved; but hon. Members crowded the inconveniently small smoking-room on the main floor to avoid having to come upstairs in a hurry to a division. It was not correct that all the accommodation was for Ministers; but since the new rules were adopted it had become necessary for them to do more Departmental work in the House of Commons than in their own offices, and it was imperative that they should have rooms in which they could see their Departmental officials and receive deputations. Nothing would give the First Commissioner of Works greater pleasure than to be able to solve these problems of House of Commons' accommodation, but to nine out of ten suggestions made there were insurmountable objections. The building was one of the greatest of their national monuments, and they must be jealous of proposals involving great structural alterations.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said that, before passing to that question, the noble Lord might answer the Question how it was that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham still got a large room, although not any longer a member of the Government.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: (Donegal, S.): It is preferential treatment.

LORD BALCARRES: The large room in question is eleven feet long and five feet six inches broad.

MR. DALZIEL: Why does he have a room?

LORD BALCARRES said the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, though a private Member, was Leader of the Liberal Unionist Party, and he was conceded the privilege of this tiny room just in the same way as the Leader of the Nationalist Party and the Leader of the Welsh Liberal Party, who were also provided with rooms.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): The noble Lord has not given any answer with reference to the question of the door.

LORD BALCARRES said he understood certain officials thought that if the door were opened the draught would be very serious indeed. It was on account of that objection the suggestion had not been agreed to.

CAPTAIN NORTON suggested that a swing door might be provided.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) asked whether the Department was considering the possibility of providing extra library accommodation. The rooms now were very congested.

SIR BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.) said he should like to say a few words in favour of the ventilation of the House which had been very much abused. He agreed with the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight that the proper ventilation was fresh air, and that the best ventilation was from open windows. But there were people who, while pretending to believe that Providence had done most things well, thought the best thing that could be done was to set up a little atmosphere of their own. They met these people in railway carriages, churches, and chapels. He never went to a county council, or a grand jury, or a church, without being obliged to walk out because the air was so abominable, but he was always comfortable enough in that Chamber. The other rooms in the House were not too well ventilated, but that was because certain hon. Members were always insisting on shutting the windows. It was just the same in the Committee rooms in the old days. Now that ventilators had been provided there the atmosphere was very much better. On the whole he did not think any more money ought to be spent on the House. He should like more accommodation in the smoking-room, but he did not think it was necessary for hon. Members to be always smoking and always drinking tea. The hon. Member for East Mayo had told them that a great disadvantage of the smoking-room was that it made Members lose their voices. He did not know that the atmosphere of the smoking-room had this effect, but that might not always be regarded as a disadvantage.

MR. FORDE RIDLEY (Bethnal Green, S. W.) asked whether some arrangement could not be devised to draw off the gas fumes from the apartment adjoining the tea-room. The health and comfort of the waitresses ought to be considered, for they had to spend long hours there. He had experienced great inconvenience from time to time on account of the nauseating feeling caused by the gas fumes which absolutely filled the room. They would not put up with such an inconvenience in their own houses. It was really an intolerable nuisance, and he would, therefore, press the Department to do what they could to put a stop to it. If some plan could not be devised for drawing off the gas fumes, it might be possible to introduce electric heaters, so that hon. Members would not be subjected to the trouble which they had at present to undergo. As to the smoking accommodation, which was very small, he suggested that the fine courtyard around the large cloak-rooms might be converted into one of the most beautiful rooms in the whole building. It seemed to him a great pity that this courtyard could not be used by Members of the House. He should like to see it glazed over and turned into what might be termed a winter garden. If that was impracticable, he would suggest that a few tables and chairs might be placed in it so that during the summer months hon. Members might be able to sit in the courtyard instead of being driven into the overcrowded rooms.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said he did not at all agree with hon. Gentlemen who, on getting into the House, immediately proceeded to complain of the provision made for their creature comforts, although they were far better accommodated there than at home. He thought, however, the arrangements ought in some degree to be consistent with the preservation of health. The House of Commons at present was not consistent with the preservation of health. He spoke feelingly on this point. He gave the whole of his time to his Parliamentary work. He was there from the time the House opened until it adjourned, unless health reasons prevented him. He had suffered severely under the new rule which robbed hon. Members of the half-holiday on Wednesday. When he was not in that Chamber he was working as hard as he could in the library, and it was no exaggeration to say that in the library he had moved from room to room to get into a decent atmosphere. The Parliament of 1886–92 was a bad Parliament. It was a coercion Parliament, but still his Christian feeling compelled him to say that out of every ten Members one died, and he was confident that some of these deaths were due to the insanitary condition of the House. They were voting money for spacious rooms for the House of Lords which they never used. Members of this House would use those rooms if they had them. Why were not the side galleries opened to visitors? Those galleries were not used by Members except perhaps half-a-dozen times in the session. As to the suggestion made by the hon. Member for South-West Bethnal Green, he should be sorry to see the courtyard turned into a smoking-room or winter garden. That would be perfectly consonant with the English disposition, for he had always understood that the beautiful crypt had at one time been converted into a dining-room for the Speaker. He thought they ought to have pure air, be free from draughts, and come there without injury to their health. In the corridors there was never pure air; and the ventilation of the library was exeedingly defective. In winter the place was little short of an oven; and the whole place was intolerable. He would like to know why they should keep up three magnificent dining-rooms for the House of Lords which were never used. Why should not the Members of the House of Commons have the loan of those rooms when they were not used? They all loved the House of Lords, but he thought their Lordships would not be harmed by the Members of the House of Commons occasionally dining there. Full power should be given to the Members of the House of Commons to use those rooms and the library of the House of Lords.

*Sir H. MEYSEY-THOMPSON (Staffordshire, Handsworth) said that he wished to point out to the noble Lord that to give effect to the proposal of the hon. Member for the Totnes Division of Devonshire no structural alterations were necessary. All that was done when this method of conducting divisions was tried before was to move the desk at which the clerks marked the names of Members from one end of the "No" Lobby to the other. He would also like to call the attention of the noble Lord to the armchairs in the Library. To begin with, there were too few of them, and most of the presumably Gothic ones that were there combined nearly every possible defect. They were extremely ugly, they were extremely uncomfortable, and they were very heavy and difficult to move.

Mr. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.) said he wished to draw the attention of the noble Lord to the grill in the ladies' gallery. The ventilation in that gallery was perfectly abominable; and he had heard from foreign visitors that it was a great inconvenience. It was alleged that the grill had been introduced more than a century ago because the ladies had expressed disapproval of what had taken place in the House; but similar expressions of opinion had been made in the gallery set apart for male visitors. He knew that the hon. Member for East Leeds proposed to have the grill removed, but that certain Conservative Members stood in the way. If it were removed it would be an enormous advantage to the ladies who visited the House. In no other Legislature in the world was there such a separation of the sexes and such an interference with the sound of the voices of the speakers. He hoped the noble Lord would take this matter into his serious consideration, and he felt sure that the removal of the grill would meet with the approval of the great majority of the Members of the House.

Mr. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby) said that there was an excessive and silly use of the electric light in the House. One day last July he found thirty-seven electric lights burning to the considerable discomfort of the House.

*The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: Order, order! Lighting comes under another item of the Vote.

Mr. DALZIEL said he wished to draw the attention of the Committee to a very important precedent set by the present Government. He referred to the setting aside of a room for the occupation and use of a Member of the House who was not a member of the Government. The explanation given by the noble Lord was the most extraordinary he had ever heard on the part of the Conservative and Unionist Government as to why that course had been taken. They were told that the right hon. Member for West Birmingham was the Leader of the Liberal Unionist Party. He had no personal objection to that right hon. Gentleman having a room; the right hon. Gentleman might have six rooms so far as he was concerned. But the statement that the right hon. Gentleman was the Leader of the Liberal Unionist Party in the House was made for the first time on the part of a member of the Conservative and Unionist Administration. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham was not at all in the same position as the hon. Member for Waterford who led the Irish Nationalist Party, or the hon. Member who was Chairman of the Welsh Party. In their case they were duly elected by the Party they led at the commencement of the session, and they had their own Whips. But from what data were the Committee to understand that the Liberal Unionists in the House constituted a separate Party and a separate organisation? During the existence of the present Administration he always understood that the Liberal Unionist Party were part and parcel of the present Government Party, and that, if they were not the masters, at any rate they were the joint-partners in the Administration. When did the election of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham to the leadership of the Liberal Unionist Party take place? It had not been publicly announced. If this precedent was quietly adopted, it would be open to any Member to go to the First Commissioner of Works and make a representation that he was the leader of a Party, although he had never been elected to the position, and get a comfortable private room for himself in some part of the House. If this precedent was set, it was only a question of whether or not some private Member could bring sufficient force to bear on the Government to get a private room. If the disposition of rooms was going round, why should not the Leader of the Labour Party get one? There was no Party more entitled to that privilege. An hon. Member might go to the First Commissioner and say, "If I am not a leader of a Party, I ought to be, and I must have a private room." He contended that they could not in that House recognise separate and distinct Parties unless they met at the beginning of the session and elected their own Chairman and their own Whips. He did not know whether the Liberal Unionist Party itself would accept the statement of the noble Lord. He saw the hon. Member for Durham present; and, in the absence of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, perhaps that hon. Gentleman could tell the Committee at what date the right hon. Member for West Birmingham had been elected Leader of the Liberal Unionist Party, and what qualified him to be the Leader of that Party? If the noble Lord said that the right hon. Gentleman was really elected Leader of of that Party, and was fully entitled to that position, he would withdraw all he had stated: but he contended that if the right hon. Gentleman had not been so elected as Chairman of the Liberal Unionist Party in the House, that right hon. Gentleman had no claim to a separate private room.

MR. ELLIOT (Durham) said he had been asked by the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy Burghs to throw some light as to the Leadership of the Liberal Unionist Party, but he did not know that he was entitled to do so. As regarded the hon. Member's complaint that a private room in that building had been allotted to the right hon Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, on the ground that he was the Leader of the Liberal Unionist Party in the House, he could only say that it was the first time since Liberal Unionism began that he had heard that a room had been allotted to the Leader of the Liberal Unionist Party, as such, in the House. For a great many years when the Party was a considerable power in that House it was led by Lord Hartington, and he never remembered that Lord Hartington had a room allotted to him there. Nor did he remember during the many years he had been connected with the Party any formal election at the beginning of the session of a Leader of the Party in question. He deprecated in that House the breaking up of the constitution into too many separate Parties, too many separate leaders, and too many separate sets of Whips. He thought they had gone quite far enough in that respect, and he could only say that the giving of an official position in that House to the Leader of the Liberal Unionist Party was done without their knowledge.

MAJOR SEELY asked the noble Lord to reconsider the matter. If it had been the custom to give a room in that House to the Leader of the Liberal Unionist Party, then he should have one allotted to him now, but it was very doubtful whether the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was the Leader of the Liberal Unionist Party. He understood the right hon. Gentleman was repudiated by the hon. Member for Durham, and, no doubt, by other Members opposite. As a matter of fact the Leader of the Liberal Unionist Party had never before had a room in the House, and why should the innovation be made when it was doubtful whether the right hon. Gentleman was the Leader of the Party. The noble Lord had unwittingly conveyed a mistaken impression to the Committee.

LORD BALCARRES did not know whether hon. Gentlemen expected him to enter into a vexed question of this kind on a very small technical point. The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy Burghs had remarked that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was not the Leader of the Liberal Unionist Party in that House. If the hon. Gentleman satisfied the First Commissioner of Works of that he (Lord Balcarres) presumed the First Commissioner would ask the right hon. Gentleman to give up his room. The hon. Member for Durham said that when Lord Hartington was Leader of the Party he had no room. He (Lord Balcarres) was not in the House at the time, but if Lord Hartington had no room in those days neither had the Welsh Liberal Party nor the Irish Nationalist Party. The fact that a room had been allotted to the use of the right hon. Gentleman seemed scarcely to justify the amount of discussion it had already involved. The use of a very dark room in a very detached part of the House did not call for serious or prolonged consideration. The hon. Member for Bethnal Green had asked if they could not draw off the gas fumes in the tea-rooms. His reply to that was that they were expending money in ventilation, which it was hoped would supply a remedy for the evil. The hon. Member for the Totnes Division had asked for an improvement to be made in the closing of the outer and inner doors with a view to adding to the comfort and convenience of hon. Members awaiting a division, and had stated that no structural alterations were necessary to effect that object. They, however, could not undertake to alter the arrangement for divisions without first obtaining the consent of the House.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny) called attention to the necessity for a room to which hon. Members could be taken in cases of illness. He believed that the House possessed a medicine chest which was never opened. Further, he thought there should be a medical gentleman who could be called upon in cases of necessity. An arrangement might be made under which, by granting a sum of money to Westminster Hospital, they could by pressing an electric button obtain the services of a doctor at a moment's notice. He trusted that attention would be given to the necessity for a separate room, suitable appliances, and the prompt services of a medical man to deal with sudden casses of illness.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland) asked whether it would not be possible to avoid discussions year after year upon the accommodation of the House. They had devoted the greater part of that sitting to debating matters which, although a concern to hon. Members individually, were of the smallest interest to the country. He advocated the appointment of a Standing Committee, like the Kitchen Committee, who could act in co-operation with the First Commissioner of Works and deal with complaints and suggestions.

LORD BALCARRES said although he was afraid that he could not accede to the suggestion of the hon. Member to set aside a room for unfortunate incidents that occurred at rare intervals he was authorised by the Serjeant-at-Arms to say that his room was available at all times of the day and night for the reception of anyone who might become suddenly ill. With regard to the question of telephonic communication with Westminster Hospital he had consulted with his noble friend the First Commissioner of Works, and he hoped it would be possible to have telephonic communication with the hospital shortly.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 114; Noes 202. (Division List No. 149.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Austen, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Beaumont, Wentworth C.B.
Benn, John Williams
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Cheetham, John Frederick
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, Capt EC(SAndrw'sBghs
Emmott, Alfred
Evans,Sir FrancisH.(Maidstone
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Findlay, Alexander(LanarkNE
Fuller, J. M. F.
Grey, Rt. Hon Sir E. (Berwick)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Harcourt, Lewis
Hardie,J.Keir (MerthyrTydvil)
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hayter, Rt. Hon.Sir Arthur D.
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David Brynmor(Sw'nsea
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Kitson, Sir James
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Moss, Samuel
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal(TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
Parrott, William
Partington, Oswald
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Priestley, Arthur
Richards, Thomas(W.Monm'th
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson. Edmund (Dundee)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Slack, John Bamford
Spencer,Rt.Hn.C.R (Northants
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donald
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan,E.)
Thomas,DavidAlfred(Merthyr)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wills,Arthur Walters (N.Dorset
Wilson, John (Falkirk)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Harwood and Mr. Mooney.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Alhusen, Augustus HenryEden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster,Rt. Hn.Hugh O
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. JoscelineFitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt.Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barry, Sir Francis T.(Windsor
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hn. A. Benjamin
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, Lt.-Col HF (Middlesex)
Bowles,T.Gibson (King'sLynn)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brymer, William Ernest
Butcher, John George
Campbell,RtHn.JA. (Glasgow)
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)

Chamberlain, RtHnJ. A.(Worc.
Chamberlayne, T.(S'thampton)
Channing, Francis Allston
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colomb, Rt. Hn. Sir John C.R.
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, SirT.R.(Tower Hamlets
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt Hn. Sir Joseph C.
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fellowes, RtHn.AilwynEdward
Fergusson,Rt. Hn SirJ. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R.B.(Inv'rn'ssB'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J.E(Elgin & Nairn
Gordon,Maj.Evans(T'r H'mlets
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Grey, Ernest (West Ham)
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nd'ry
Hardy,Lawrence(Kent,Ashford
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Heath, ArthurHoward (Hanley
Heath, SirJames(Staffords.NW
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford,W.)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
Jessel, Captain HerbertMerton
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt. Hn. Col.W.
Kerr, John
Kimber, Sir Henry
Knowles, Sir Lees
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Hn.H.L.W.(Mile End
Lawson, John Grant(Yorks.NR
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Lockwood, Lieut.- Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham
Long,Rt.Hn.Walter(Bristol,S,)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft
Lucas, Reginald J.(Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, SirLewis(EdinburghW.
Malcolm, Ian
Maxwell,RtHnSirH.E (Wigt'n)
Maxwell,W.J.H.(Dumfriessh're
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milvain, Thomas
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Pease, Herbert Pike(Darlington
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Ritchie,Rt.Hon.Chas.Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, SirHarryS.(Limehouse
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Rt. Hon.Lord (Lancs.
Stewart, Sir Mark J.M'Taggart
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tuffnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Vincent,ColSir C.E.H.(Sheffield
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walrond, Rt.Hn.SirWilliam H.
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby,Lt.-Col. A.C.E. Taunton
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und.Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A.Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson-Todd, SirW.H.(Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt.Hn.E.R.(Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wylie, Alexander

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said that for the good of Parliament itself, and on the principle of equality between Member and Member he wished to find out distinctly why a private room had been given to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, who had no right to preferential treatment above other private Members. The right hon. Gentleman, with his retiring disposition, would be the very first to deprecate any compliment being paid to himself at the expense of his fellow Members. If he wanted a room could he not go into the room of his son the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or conduct his correspondence in the rooms of the five or six Ministers who owed their appointment to his influence? Was this special treatment accorded because he was leader of the tariff reform movement? The late Mr. Gladstone once said that between private

Member and private Member there should be no distinction in Parliament, and that he would not belong to a House of Commons in which any such distinction was made. There were too many leaders in the House of Commons and too many who wished to be leaders. He charged the Government with having favoured the right hon. Gentleman because they were afraid of the scheme-maker and the Cabinet-maker. Other Members were more entitled to a room than he. The hon. Member for Mid-Lanark, Chairman of the Private Bills Committee, was so entitled, and so, too, was the hon. Baronet the Member for Peckham, who did the "blocking" for the Government. The right hon. Gentleman was the leader, not of a Party, but of a caucus which met in George Street, and as such had no right to any preferential treatment. He would be quite prepared to leave the question to a Gentleman well versed in the proprieties of the House of Commons: did the hon. Member for King's Lynn think the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was entitled to a private room in the House?

Mr. DALZIEL complained that the Kitchen Committee were being treated with discourtesy, and, indeed, contempt, by the authorities of the House of Lords. For some months they had been trying to arrange for the use of the House of Lords Committee room, next the present dining-room, in exchange for a House of Commons Committee room, but they had not been able to obtain any reply beyond an acknowledgment of their communication and a promise to consider the matter. The person responsible seemed to be the Lord Great Chamberlain, who he considered was not very worthy of his imposing title, or he would not treat a Committee representing and elected by the House of Commons with such a lack of respect. He hoped the noble Lord, if he had any influence in that direction, would endeavour to induce the Lord Great Chamberlain to give a reply one way or the other, so that the Kitchen Committee should not go on wasting their time with fruitless meetings.

Mr. WHITLEY (Halifax) drew attention to an item of £10,000 for the purchase of a house in Abingdon Street, and asked for what purpose the house was to be used.

Lord BALCARRES referred the hon. Member to his reply to a Question on the subject three or four weeks ago. For the £10,000 the Office of Works would obtain the existing house, which the London County Council had recently acquired under its Westminster improvement scheme. The bargain was fair to both parties. It would enable the County Council to carry out a very important road improvement, and at the same time complete a valuable block of Government property.

Mr. WHITLEY: But what will the house be used for?

Lord BALCARRES said the First Commissioner had not settled what it would be used for as the house was to be demolished to widen the street.

Mr. WHITLEY: Why buy the house if it is to be demolished?

Lord BALCARRES said the front of the house was required for the street-widening, and therefore it was necessary to demolish the house. In the matter raised by the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy Burghs his position was one of some delicacy. The room in question was vested in the Lord Great Chamberlain, over whom the Office of Works had no control whatever. He would take care, however, that the representations of the hon. Member were duly laid before the First Commissioner of Works.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said the explanation of the noble Lord with regard to the purchase of the house in Abingdon Street required to be either seriously considered or materially supplemented. The £10,000 was to be paid for a building which apparently was not to be applied to any Parliamentary purpose whatever. Why, then, did the money appear on this Vote at all? If it was to be used for public offices it should come in some other Vote. There was a Vote for each public building and for miscellaneous buildings, and this sum should appear in one of those. He did not quite understand why they were asked to contribute at all in this matter. It was purely a question for the London County Council, which had proved itself quite competent to carry out other public improvements. He did not comprehend the reason for the introduction of a Vote in this House upon this matter, because this building did not come under the Houses of Parliament. Would the noble Lord tell them what on earth this had to do with the Houses of Parliament? If he knew to what purpose this property was to be appropriated then he would know to what Vote it belonged. Could the noble Lord tell them that this building was to be appropriated to some purpose belonging to the Houses of Parliament? If he could not do so, then he could not see why this £10,000 was in this Vote at all.

Lord BALCARRES said he had had no notice of this Question, otherwise he would have been able to give a fuller Answer. He had been asked why this sum had not been included in miscellaneous buildings. The reason was that this building came within the Palace of Westminster, and therefore it was put in with the Houses of Parliament buildings. The Government had yet to settle whether this site should be used for erecting a fresh block of Government offices, or whether it should be preserved as an open space. He should be glad on a future occasion to give any further information of a detailed character, but at the moment he was only able to give the general facts.

Mr. LAWRENCE drew attention to the unnecessary lighting of the electric lights in the various corridors and lobbies. He noticed on days when the sun was shining that these lights were on, and they had been fixed here and there in places where they were not required.

Mr. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I think, Mr. Deputy-Chairman if we had a little more light now it would do no harm.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

2. £36,500, to complete the sum for Royal Palaces.

Mr. Gibson Bowles.

Mr. WHITLEY said he noticed that Item D showed an increase. He wished to draw attention to the increase in this item in order to see whether a limit could not be put to this expenditure. Two years ago it amounted to £7,000; the next year to £8,000, and this year it had increased to £10,000 for new works, alterations, and additions. This was in addition to the large sums spent at the time of the accession of His Majesty for improving Buckingham Palace and other palaces in the occupation of His Majesty. He did not think they ought to have this annual increase in this particular item. Then there was Item E., which amounted to £38,180, and this showed a slight reduction upon last year, but, nevertheless, it remained at a higher figure than it stood at four years ago. He thought there was room for a substantial amount of economy upon this Vote. He also noticed that certain particulars had been withdrawn during the last three years. He alluded to the details of Item A in regard to salaries, wages, and allowances. Why had they been withheld? It had not been done by the authority of the House, and he hoped the noble Lord would be able to answer that Question.

Lord BALCARRES said he should be happy to give the precise details under the six headings which formed Item A. He did not think the hon. Member was correct in saying that the information had been withheld. He could give the hon. Member any particular items if he would mention which he required. As to the alterations and additions there had been a small increase, but objection had not been taken by the hon. Member for Halifax to any particular item. The two largest items which had caused this increase were electric lighting at St. James's Palace and electric lighting at Hampton Court. The safety of thoes great historical monuments were better secured by a system of electric lighting. He thought these increases were well worthy of acceptance by the Committee, and they were doing their best to prevent any extravagance.

*Colonel WELBY asked if there was any intention on the part of the Board of Works to do anything to bring the façade of Buckingham Palace into harmony with the Memorial to Queen Victoria. The more that Memorial grew the grander it became, and the more it seemed out of keeping with the front of the Palace. No mere renovation or repainting of the front would do; they wanted a great scheme for a new front in order to bring it into harmony with the Memorial. He wished to know whether that alteration would come within the scope of the Memorial or would it have to be done at some future time.

Lord BALCARRES said that was a question which, as the hon. Gentleman must see, must stand over in the meantime.

Vote agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £7,900, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for Expenditure in respect of Osborne."

Mr. WHITLEY said that two years ago this Vote was lumped in with the preceeding one. That was a form of the accounts which he hoped would not be maintained. In the first place he objected to this Vote on the ground that it was not properly a Civil Service Estimate. He understood that Osborne House was used as a convalescent home for member's of His Majesty's forces. He thought, therefore, that the cost ought to be borne by the Army and Navy funds and not the Civil Service Estimates. He asked what was the number of patients during the year who had obtained benefit from this expenditure, and what was the average number who had been in the convalescent home. The expense seemed to be rather heavy. He thought the Committee ought to have something in the nature of an annual Report, or even a footnote on the Estimates, giving such particulars as would justify this demand for money. The details showed that there was a house governor who received £360 this year. The same item last year was £400, and a footnote explained that this officer's salary was subject to a deduction of 10 per cent. as he was in receipt of retired pay from the Admiralty. That raised the question of the re-employment of persons who were retired on handsome pensions voted by the House. The pensions of well-paid officers amounted to two-thirds of their salaries, if they had served their full time, and yet there were continual cases of the re-employment of such men at salaries which doubled their pensions. What pay did this person receive in addition to the £360 on the Vote? He thought men who were in receipt of very small pensions, ranging from £6 to £25 a year, should be encouraged to apply for these posts. He supposed he was correct in assuming that the house governor had a free residence, coal, and gas, in addition to the amount that appeared for salary. He asked the noble Lord to state also what the arrangements were as to the payment of fees by the officers who took advantage of this institution. Did they pay anything in addition to the item that appeared in the appropriation-in-aid of 2s. 6d. per day? Was that charge always collected from the patients, or did it depend upon the rank of the person concerned?

Lord BALCARRES said the hon. Member had raised a point which was discussed last year as to whether the Vote for Osborne House should appear on the Civil Service Estimates. Certainly there were services provided there from which the Army and Navy drew advantage, but the question raised had been carefully considered. It should be remembered that a large part of Osborne was of the nature now of a public museum which was visited by many thousands of the public. That, he thought, was sufficient to justify its place on the Civil Service Estimates. Last year there were 255 admissions to the home, and the average number there was thirty-five. The gross total required was £16,700, from which the appropriation-in-aid and fees paid, amounting to £1,800, was deducted. But there was a considerable income from the Osborne Estate which was credited to the Woods and Forests Department, and he dared say there was an annual sum from the cadet college on the estate which might be credited against the outlay under this Vote. He believed, too, that many of the officers, owing to the exceptional advantages of the situation, completely recovered from their illnesses, which seemed to him in the nature of an economy. He thought it would be found that the expense of Osborne was very moderate indeed.

Dr. HUTCHINSON (Sussex, Rye) said the cost per bed was £600.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland) asked whether the money on this Vote included anything for the college.

Lord BALCARRES said it did not.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL said that if the average number of patients was thirty-five, £600 per bed seemed to be a large expenditure. That seemed to him a most extraordinary sum, and he believed a case had been made out for the most careful inquiry.

Lord BALCARRES said that although he had stated that that was the total expense of the hospital and convalescent home, the hon. Member must understand Osborne House was to all intents and purposes a great public museum, visited by thousands of the public. All of this had to be kept up, and there was a large collection of works of art, formed by Her late Majesty. This and the parks and gardens were open to the public, and were entirely included in the expenditure mentioned.

Mr. BRIGHT (Shropshire, Oswestry) asked whether it was possible to dissect the different expenditure on the different sections of Osborne. He had been a director of an hospital and he knew that the average cost of each bed was only £60 or £70 per annum.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said there was a museum which cost a certain amount of expenditure and gave great pleasure to a considerable number of people. Then there was a convalescent hospital in respect of which they were asked to vote a large sum. Thirdly, there was the Admiralty cadet training college; and, fourthly, there were the apartments for which the noble Lord said the Department of Woods and Forests were responsible. It seemed to him that this was an extraordinary method of keeping account. The noble Lord said that a certain amount of revenue was derived by the Department of Woods and Forests for Osborne, but could he say what it amounted to? No, the noble Lord could not. He could see no reason why that should not be an appropriation-in-aid. Again, why was there no mention here of the additional sum of £20,500 asked for by the Admiralty for the training of cadets? The Osborne Estate was apparently under four different managements, which seemed to him a very bad arrangement, but he understood that the Chief Commissioner of Works was supreme. The arrangement was a very bad one and did not lend itself to efficient and responsible administration.

*Mr. J. A. PEASE (Essex, Saffron Walden) said that the Committee were asked to vote £14,900 for a convalescent home at Osborne, but now they were told that whilst the Vote excluded the expense of the cadet training college, it included certain works, and the museum. The Committee should be informed how much of the Vote was to be appropriated to each purpose. It was absurd to say that a sum of £14,000 was required to support thirty-five beds in the convalescent home. The extravagance of the expenditure upon this object would be obvious when it was pointed out that the cost worked out at about £10 per patient per week, whereas the cost of properly maintaining a convalescent home ought not to amount to more than 15s. a head weekly. He was conversant with homes where the cost did not exceed that sum and the number of berths were less than thirty-five. The matter called for some further explanation.

Mr. BRIGG thought the solution might be found in the number of Departments that had to do with the subject and the number of people for whom occupation had to be found. He drew the noble Lord's attention to an item of £1,460 in respect of receipts from patients, and asked whether it was a condition that the patients should pay 2s. 6d. each per day, or whether and by whom the payments were made on their behalf.

MR. WHITLEY noticed that there were 4,000 acres of land in connection with the hospital and inquired what use was made of it. The management of the whole thing showed a state of muddle. There were at least four and possibly more divergent interests dealing with the estate, and there was certainly a very small result for a very great cost. They were entitled to ask that there should be some new method adopted in dealing with the matter. It was true that the Vote was not so large this year, but last year there were charges for alterations and extensions, and as a protest against an increased permanent charge he moved to reduce the Vote by £100.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £7,800, be granted for the said service."—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

LORD BALCARRES said the hon. Member had asserted that a state of muddle had arisen because there were four divergent interests. Did the hon. Gentleman think the muddle would disappear if the estate were put under four Departments instead of one. The whole control was with the Office of Works. A portion of the estate was handed over for the purposes of a naval hospital. That would be included in a Vote on the Navy Estimates over which they had no control, whilst the Admiralty had nothing to do with the other part of the estate except so far as they were interested in the hospital patients who spent their period of convalescence there.

MR. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury) asked whether the position of Osborne House was in any way analogous to the college at Dartmouth.

LORD BALCARRES said he did not know anything regarding the College at Dartmouth. Osborne House was the residence of the late Queen, and was handed over by His Majesty the King to the nation for the purpose of a convalescent home. It was one building; it could not be separated by wings for naval or military purposes, and it was unusual to bring in the name of the Sovereign in discussions of that nature. As, however, Osborne House contained private property, it seemed advisable that a portion of it should be kept absolutely private. For that reason the public was admitted only to one part—the museum. The whole control of Osborne House Museum—the portion to which the public were admitted—of the private apartments of Her late Majesty, and of the Naval and Military Convalescent Home was locally and directly under the house governor, and Departmentally, under the First Commissioner. The medical control was under the consulting surgeon and physician, who resided in the Isle of Wight, and there was also what was called the medical consultative staff (unpaid), who paid regular visits to the convalescent home. The officers, who were sent to the home on the recommendation respectively of the Admiralty and the War Office, paid 2s. 6d. a day. In this they were simply following the arrangement which already existed at Netley and other hospitals.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £62,400, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens."

MR. GIBSON BOWLES called attention to what he described as the "absolute and wanton defacement" of the Green Park by the construction across it of a hard broad road 60 feet wide, which was supposed to be reserved for pedestrians, but which bore all the marks of an intended permanent road for vehicular traffic. He could conceive no reason for this road, for the making of which trees had been cut down, and no less than two acres of grass had been removed. It was a wasteful expenditure even if it were for the use of vehicular traffic, for which it was not required What was wanted in London parks was not broad hard granite, asphalte, or wooden roads but trees and grass, and trees had been cut down and grass removed from this road and no reason had been given for such an extraordinary proceeding. The major part of the cost of construction—namely, a sum of £4,000, had been defrayed out of a fund raised for the unemployed in London, and he would suggest, if it was really desired to employ the unemployed, that they should be engaged to restore this part of the park to its original state. A six-foot path would have amply supplied the wants of all the people who were ever likely to use the road, and he could not conceive what the purpose of it was unless it was to form a sort of vista to the Memorial to be erected to Her late Majesty. Whatever the object might be with which the road had been made, he denounced it as a gross outrage on the part of the First Commissioner of Works, who had defaced and practically spoiled the most precious park in London. If the noble Lord could say there was likely to be a vast amount of traffic over the path, or that it led from somewhere to somewhere, or that it had any quality to recommend it, or that in his opinion it was really an improvement, he would have nothing further to say. His conviction, however, was that the noble Lord himself must have regretted the defacement to the Green Park, and he seriously commended his suggestion that the unemployed should be again used, if necessary at the cost of another £4,000, to restore the path to its original condition.

*SIR A. HAYTER (Walsall) agreed with the hon. Member for King's Lynn as to the hideousness of this so-called improvement. He could not understand why so enormous a quantity of turf had been cut from both sides of the road. The foundations of the pathway rendered it unsuitable for vehicular traffic, there being no solid granite blocks for a foundation, but if it was intended merely for a footpath, why had it been made of such enormous width? He was extremely sorry the park had been destroyed for the sake of a path.

LORD BALCARRES said the hon. Member for King's Lynn did not appreciate the situation. This pathway was not for the purpose of a thoroughfare across the Green Park. It had been planted with three rows of trees on either side and was an integral part of the Memorial. In the course of time it would form a fine avenue with rows of trees leading from a great thoroughfare to a grand memorial, analogous in many respects to the Broad Walk at Kensington. Kensington Gardens and Hampton Court Park were laid out in avenues of trees, not merely to provide roadways, but to make fine vistas, and this pathway would in time make a fine vista. There was no intention of using the pathway for carriage traffic; as the hon. Baronet opposite had stated, the foundations rendered it unsuitable for that purpose. Eighteen months ago hon. Members declared that St. James's Park was being spoilt by the making of the pathway which was now universally recognised to be a great improvement, and he believed a similar result would be achieved in the present case. He did not admit that anything like 400 trees had been cut down. The grass area in St. James's Park to-day was larger than before the improvement was made.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) reminded the noble Lord that there were such things as avenues with grass between the trees which were very beautiful. The Long Walk at Windsor was such an one. In any case a path fifteen feet wide would have been ample for all purposes.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked whether in the appointment of park-keepers the claims of old soldiers and sailors were considered. One of the obstacles to recruiting was the great difficulty experienced by old soldiers in obtaining employment, and he hoped the First Commissioner would not lose sight of the formally expressed desire of the House of Commons that old soldiers and sailors should be appointed to these posts. He congratulated the Board of Works upon the great improvement which had taken place in recent years in the parks, which were now as beautiful as those in any capital in Europe.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) said he wished to draw attention to the contracts for refreshment in the kiosks in the parks, and also to the supply of chairs and free seats. Ten or twelve years ago when this question of seats was raised in the House they were told by the then First Commissioner of Works that no rent was paid by the contractor to the State. Since that time the First Commissioner of Works had been somewhat severely heckled on the subject, and the year following that heckling there appeared in the accounts an item of £1,000 paid by the contractors for the right of putting seats in the parks; so that it was quite clear that the First Commissioner of Works had been deluded by someone, and he had frankly admitted his mistake. Subsequently the sum of £2,000 was put down as the rent received from the contractor, who now had the right to put the chairs in Hyde Park. Anyone who had visited Hyde Park on Sunday must have noticed the enormous crowds there, and in his opinion £2,000 was a very small sum to be paid for the right of putting chairs in the parks. The First Commissioner of Works told him twelve months ago that he had come to the conclusion that when the present contract expired there ought to be a much larger sum paid into the coffers of the State by the man who was allowed to put those seats in the parks. Not only was the State being defrauded by the insufficient sum that was paid, but the number of free seats in the parks was year by year diminishing, while the number of paid seats was increasing. He wished to know whether a new contract had been entered into, and if so, had the rental from the new contractor for the seats been increased? He also wished to know if tenders had been invited. The last Commissioner of Works had contemplated purchasing the chairs, and, had this been done, then the whole of the money received would have gone into the Exchequer. He thought a very considerable sum of money would have been realised in that way.

He noticed that with regard to the supply of refreshments in the parks, there was an item of £1,000 for the purchase and repair of refreshment kiosks in Regent's Park. He wished to know if any rent was received for the use of those kiosks by the refreshment contractors, and were they obliged to give any guarantee to redeem the promise they made to supply the public with wholesome refreshments at a very moderate price. He had raised before in the House the question of the character of the refreshments supplied, and he was by no means satisfied that even at the present time they were of as good a quality as they might be, and they might also be supplied at a cheaper rate. If the Government erected these kiosks and received rent for them, he wished to know who determined the amount of rent. Some of the contractors had written asking for an interview with him in order to explain the circumstances under which they supplied refreshments, but he thought that was an abominable practice, and he trusted the refreshment contractors would take warning and not renew those invitations to anyone who happened to complain of the price and quality of their refreshments.

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University) said he desired to have an explanation in regard to an incident which took place last winter when most hon. Members were out of town. He alluded to the two old ladies whose stall was removed from St. James's Park. He did not know what their rights were, but it was stated in the Press that these old ladies were evicted from their stall in a manner quite unknown in this country, although it might be customary enough in Ireland. They were only reinstated in the position which they now held by the intervention of a power whose name could not be mentioned in the debates in that House. A great deal was said in the public Press on the matter, and he thought the noble Lord should explain authoritatively what was done.

MR. MOONEY (Dublin County, S.) said the trade which was now being conducted by the two old ladies was absolutely different from that which they carried on before. This gave one the impression that the old ladies were being exploited by some refreshment caterer who was doing an illegitimate trade there to the detriment of the traders in the locality.

LORD BALCARRES, replying to the Question of the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Sheffield, said that the park attendants appointed during the last two years had been retired soldiers and sailors. The hon. Member for Haggerston had asked about the chair rents. The sum of £1000 was paid by the man who held the contract. The contract would expire at the end of the present year, and, no doubt, during the summer or autumn the whole question would have to be reconsidered. The hon. Member had been misinformed as to the number of free seats. There were between 600 and 700, and the number had not been diminished in Hyde Park.

Mr. CREMER said he had known the parks for forty years, and he had noticed that the free seats had been gradually diminishing in number.

Lord BALCARRES said the free seats were moved about from time to time, but the total number was not only not smaller, but rather larger. As to Regent's Park, the New Works Vote contained an item of £1,000 for the purpose of buying up the central kiosk. Hitherto the rent received by the Office of Works had been £4 a year. That arrangement was now coming to an end. They hoped to obtain under the new arrangement £250, after the outlay of the £1,000 which had been sanctioned by the Treasury. At to the two old ladies referred to by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University, he had really little to say. There were, in the old days, a large number of establishments similar to that formerly held by these ladies. They existed pretty well all over the parks. Notice was given a good many years ago to the persons who occupied similar places, and they recognised that they had no title or *status*. They received small compensation to give up their tenure. In this case, as hon. Members knew, there had been a great deal of newspaper discussion, in which there had been much exaggeration. The right of occupation, being terminable, had expired, and there was some kind of informal tenancy. As the right hon. Gentleman had said, another place was substituted further down on the Horse Guards Parade. The tenure on which the two old ladies occupied the kiosk was terminable at the decease of one or both. It was not desirable, as hon. Members would agree, that such a tenancy should be allowed to become a freehold. It was not in the interest of the Crown, the public, or the Department, that they should countenance any claim for freehold in respect of such occupation. With regard to what had been said by the hon. Member for Dublin County he hoped the statement made was not well-founded, but, of course, it was a matter upon which inquiry ought to be made.

Mr. CREMER asked whether the same rule that was to be applied in regard to the kiosk in Regent's Park would be applied to the kiosk in Kew Gardens, and to similar establishments where they existed in other parks. He could not find that any rent was recorded for the kiosk in Kew Gardens, where an enormous business was done.

Lord BALCARRES said a rent was recorded. Some of the kiosks were very old. As in the case of the Regent's Park kiosk, whenever the present tenures expired the opportunity would be taken of increasing the rents and improving the services.

Mr. WHITLEY said he was sure the public appreciated the extension of Richmond Park made by His Majesty through the removal of the railing round the enclosure. The finance, however, showed an increase from £3,000 to £5,000. Certain offices were to be abolished and certain new ones created.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next; Committee also report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

ADJOURNMENT (UNDER STANDING ORDER No. 10) (EDUCATION ACT, 1902. BOROUGH OF EAST HAM).

*Mr. ERNEST GRAY (West Ham, N.) said the importance of the question which he had to bring before the notice of the House would not be doubted.

For the first time in the course of municipal government in modern times a large local authority was found unanimously and emphatically declaring that it would no longer continue to discharge its statutory obligations, not from any dislike of them, but because of its inability to meet the consequent financial charges. The result of the action of the local authority of East Ham was that thousands of children were to be turned into the streets and hundreds of teachers and other officials were to be dismissed. The whole work of popular education was to be brought to a standstill. That incident in itself would make this question important; but it did not stand alone; and the fact that it was typical of a disposition prevailing throughout a large area, made it assume a position of considerable magnitude. Nor would the undoubted urgency of the question be contested. Unless some *modus vivendi* could be found within the next few weeks, there would be 23,000 children at the close of this month without school accommodation in East Ham. Seven hundred officials had received notice to quit their employment and they must find their livelihood elsewhere. This must not be taken to be the view of one set of councillors alone, either, because it was no exaggeration to say that several local authorities representing probably a population of 2,000,000 at least were watching anxiously for the comment of the Prime Minister in order themselves to decide what action they would take in the near future.

On April 18th last the council of the municipal borough of East Ham had before it the materially increased demand of 9d. in the rate for educational purposes. Three new schools were wanted, and in that district such was the value of rateable property and such the population, that from 2d. to 3d. in the £ would be required to build a single school. Confronted with this burden, which they could not support, they at once resolved not to continue to administer the Act of 1902 and instructed the education committee to bring their work under the Act to a conclusion. Admitting the temptation and the irritation under which they acted, and sympathising very fully indeed with the object they had in view, he could not express approval of a method so unconstitutional as that which they had adopted. Although not connected with the borough of East Ham, but representing the neighbouring one of West Ham, he felt himself bound to take the action he now took, because for nine years past he had been very closely associated with this question. In 1896, when the heavily-rated districts applied to Parliament for relief, he, with the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean, forced the matter on the attention of Parliament and did something to secure the bringing about of the Necessitous School Boards Act. Both the right hon. Baronet and himself recognised at the time that that Act could not fulfil the legitimate desires of the ratepayers of those districts, and they did not allow the question to be pushed aside, but did their best to keep it before the House. With the Education Act of 1902 the burdens of those districts became greater, and since then, particularly during the last five months, he had been engaged in attempting to bring this subject before the House. Therefore, although, as he had said, he could not approve of the action East Ham had taken, yet having been so long associated with the question he had thought it his duty to bring this subject to the notice of the House at the earliest opportunity.

The two once tiny villages of West Ham and East Ham had become within the last thirty years densely-populated areas, dormitories and nurseries of London. The population of the borough he had the honour to represent had grown in that time from 30,000 to nearly 300,000, and if that one fact were kept in recollection four-fifths of the present position was explained. In the same period East Ham had attained a population of 117,000. During the life time of Colonel Makin, who used to represent that part of Essex in the House, the electorate had risen from 8,000 to 148,000. Land which thirty years ago was a marsh was now inhabited by 500,000 people. It had been said that it would have well repaid the West Ham Borough Council to purchase every plot of waste land within its area and make it waste land for ever to prevent any tenement being built upon it, as it was impossible to erect on land within that area tenements of sufficient value to pay for their upkeep municipally. Another fact to remember was that all the necessities of civilisation had had to be met in thirty years. With the exception of a few ten years loans, every single loan contracted during the last thirty years was still outstanding, and their capital charges were consequently heavy. Until all these debts were paid off these districts would be in the particular difficulty which he was endeavouring to explain to the House. Protests had been made against the time allowed by the Local Government Board for the repayment of these loans as being far too short, and that was one of the things which affected East Ham at this moment, because whereas the Board of Education gave fifty years as the period in which loans for school buildings should be repaid, the Local Government Board restricted the term to twenty-eight years. With a population of 117,000 East Ham had a rateable value of only £468,000, and the net produce of a penny rate on the Poor Law assessment was only £1,754. They had to provide accommodation for 25,000 scholars. While throughout England and Wales the general rule was to provide for one-sixth of the population, in towns like East and West Ham it was necessary to provide for a much larger proportion. So far as the provision of secondary education was concerned they had been able to do very little, although every penny of the so-called whisky money had been spent on building and maintaining in West Ham and East Ham respectively two of the finest technical institutes that were to be found in the country. They had therefore never failed in their duty. The difficulty was that they had this large percentage of children to accommodate.

The elementary education rate, under these conditions, during the last half-year reached an amount equal to 2s. 9d. in the £ for the year. He did not think anybody in the district believed that this position would have been avoided had the Education Act of 1902 not been passed, but it was possible that it had come earlier than it would have done had that Act not been passed. Trouble would have arisen under the old conditions with absolute certainty, for the burden entailed by taking over the voluntary schools in the district was but slight, the average attendance in voluntary schools at that moment being less than 700. He understood that in the borough of East Ham a rate of 10d. in the £ was absorbed in meeting capital charges, and in the adjoining borough no less than 1s. 1d. in the £ had to be taken before a single penny of the rate went to educational maintenance. One might take it that the general position of West Ham was very similar. It had a large child population, small capital value, and the whole of its capital charges still outstanding, hence much of the present evil. Those who inhabited better-favoured districts could not comprehend the sense of injustice which was deep-rooted throughout these areas. People looked round the country and saw that of administrative counties as local authorities under the Act of 1902 there were only five where the rate for educational purposes reached 1s. and not one where it touched 2s. Of the county boroughs forty-seven had a rate exceeding 1s., and one, West Ham, a rate exceeding 2s. In that borough the rate for last year was 2s. 8½d. and they had just decided to levy a rate for the half-year which, if spread over twelve months, equalled a rate for educational purposes alone of 2s. 11½d. There were forty-five non-county boroughs which had reached a rate of 1s., and one, East Ham, had reached nearly 3s. In thirty-four urban districts the rate had reached 1s. and in four of these it had reached 2s. Of county boroughs they had Bournemouth with a rate of 5½d., and West Ham, 2s. 11½d.; of non-county boroughs, Grantham with 4d., and East Ham, 3s.; of urban districts, Wimbledon with 5d., and Walthamstow with 2s. 5d. Was it reasonable to suppose that the inhabitants of these districts, their representatives and their local councillors, would not protest against an inequality of this character? There was much to be said for those who under such a sense of injustice took a step which perhaps was not fully justifiable.

He would probably be told that the extravagance of the local authority was the cause. It was easy for those who represented districts of large rateable values, where a great proportion of the schools were provided by charitable people without any contribution from the ratepayers, to say that this was the result of extravagance. But if they had been extravagant that extravagance had been condoned by the Board of Education. Who set the standard of efficiency? Whitehall! Had they been extravagant in teachers' salaries or in the purchase of sites? Let them be compared with London, Manchester, or Birmingham. Was the extravagance in other matters? The general district rate last half-year in East Ham was only 1s. 11d. in the pound. If the local authority were extravagant, it must be with the money of the artisan and tradesman—that was, at their own expense—and who, indeed, with a total rate of 10s. or 11s. in the pound, would embark on any expenditure that could possibly be avoided? He could understand extravagant expenditure when the rates were low, but for the last thirteen years there had not been a municipal contest in the borough of West Ham where the question of the reduction of the rates was not prominent. It could not be said that the local authority had been extravagant in building schools, unless it was extravagant to provide buildings which were comfortable, sanitary, and suitable.

He had dealt pretty largely with the causes which had led up to the present position in West Ham and East Ham—but in boroughs like Walthamstow, Tottenham, towns in the West Riding of Yorkshire and in South Wales—places which were not the overflow of large cities, but which stood quite alone and had grown up round large mines or other manufacturing industries, where there was a large population and a low rateable value, similar trouble existed. In his judgment, the Act of 1902 did not bring about this evil. How far did it affect the position? In 1897 the Government passed the Act popularly known as the Necessitous School Boards Act. The amount of the aid grant given under that Act depended on three factors—the rateable property in the districts; the child population; and the amount of the rate that had to be levied in order to meet capital charges. That Act was repealed by Section 10 of the Act of 1902. He was the only man in the House who moved that that Act should be retained, and he protested against the change. But Parliament was too busy over sectarian squabbles to take into serious consideration the financial question. And what was the consequence? There were some districts which with a rate of 2s. in 1897 were declared necessitous and received a considerable subvention. Those districts now, with a rate of 3s., actually received less money under Section 10 than they would have received had the Act of 1897 remained in force. The Act of 1902 only expedited the position.

AN HON. MEMBER: It expedited many positions.

*MR. ERNEST GRAY said that the trouble would have arisen under the old Act, but arose somewhat earlier owing to the change which had since been made. The old Act took account of three factors in fixing the amount of aid granted, but Section 10 of the later Act omitted one of those factors—the amount of rate which had to be levied in order to meet capital charges. He remembered the First Lord of the Treasury saying—

> "We are about to give 4s. in respect to every child, and the remainder of the sum will be distributed in proportion to the poverty of the district. The greater the poverty the greater the grant."

He was perfectly convinced that that was the belief and full intention of the right hon. Gentleman. He might be allowed to say that he had had many conversations with the First Lord of the Treasury on the subject during the past nine years, and had found nothing but the utmost sympathy on the part of the right hon. Gentleman with the heavily rated districts. It would be churlish on his part were he not to acknowledge that, even though it might not be credited in some quarters. In West Ham, according to the borough treasurer, the amount received under Section 10 on an average attendance of 51,000 for the year ended March, 1905, was £25,504 10s., as against £27,577 accruing on the same average attendance under the Act of 1897. At East Ham there was a loss of between £200 and £300 this year. In West Ham and in East Ham they had always loyally accepted the Education Act of 1902 and had carried it out smoothly. The only obstacle in both boroughs to its successful working was the disinclination on the part of the ratepayers to find the funds—not because they had a dislike to education in itself, but they felt that that which was an Imperial necessity should be made an Imperial charge, and that the local ratepayers ought not to be called upon to bear the whole of the burden. He hoped the Government would not have recourse to a *mandamus* against the council. The proper remedy was to restore the Act of 1897 with a more liberal scale, without disturbing Section 10 of the Act of 1902. There should be a sliding scale of grants which should expand as local necessity increased and contract again as that necessity expired. On behalf of East Ham and of his own county borough, he appealed to the Government, not for charity, but for justice. He would close with the words used by the Prime Minister in connection with the Aliens Bill, that that which was a national benefit ought to be a national burden. That was the case with education. In his opinion it would only be a fair thing to provide that a larger share of the cost of education in this country should be thrown on the National Treasury.

*Mr. CRIPPS (Lancashire, Stretford) said that, in seconding the Resolution moved by the hon. Member for West Ham, he wished to point out that there was nothing of greater importance than the question of the administration of the Education Act of 1902 in the poorer districts of the country. He thought it must be clear to every one who had listened to the speech of the hon. Member that whatever good will there might be in such a district as East Ham, the financial conditions at present were so onerous that, unless some relief was given by the Government, it was hardly to be expected that the local education authority could fulfil its educational duties. He would say at the outset that he realised the extreme difficulty of the position. He thought that everyone on both sides of the House was anxious to put education on the best possible footing, so far as administration was concerned. There was no question here of sectarian animosity on which the two sides of the House should be divided. It was undoubtedly true that in poor districts like East Ham the burden of education was felt in a very special manner. He did not say that East Ham was the worst instance; he thought that the ratepayers in all districts had at present great reason to complain of the enormously heavy burden which education was throwing on them. That was a very bad policy from the point of view of education. One of the first steps to be taken should be to make such a reapportionment of the burden of education in this country that the people in various localities who were doing their best to provide the most efficient system of education might feel that they were fairly treated with regard to expenditure, and that as far as possible the burden was put on a fair and equitable basis. He did not rise as an apologist for the local authority in East Ham. It was a mistake to allow a dislike to an Act of Parliament or a sense of injustice to be brought forward as an excuse for the local authority not carrying out the duty imposed upon it by the House. The Education Act in its main provisions undoubtedly had been a great educational reform, and it was lamentable, whatever the cause, that certain local authorities, owing to their dislike of the law, should refuse to obey it.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): What do you think of the Coercion Act?

*Mr. CRIPPS said all Acts of Parliament which were effective, and which had to be administered, of course imposed certain obligations on the administering bodies. That was a truism. It was a serious question, however, if the local authorities, on whom they had always relied for carrying out the law, instead of taking such measures to get the law which they disliked altered or repealed, refused to administer it, which as loyal subjects they ought to do.

Mr. DILLON: Why do you encourage them by seconding this Motion?

*Mr, CRIPPS said that if a private individual had a conscientious objection to certain provisions of the law and wished to emphasise that objection by enduring the penalties for breach of the law, by all means let him do so. But a local authority was in a very different position from an individual, for it was part of the governing machinery of the country. Whatever the difficulty might be in carrying out an Act of this kind, he hoped the East Ham local authority, having made their protest, and as he hoped having got some promise from the Government with regard to the burden of which they legitimately complained, would in future administer this Act.

As to the cause of the discontent in East Ham, he was in thorough sympathy with it. Nothing could be more harmful than placing an undue burden on the ratepayers in a particular locality. If a reform was to be carried out fairly and efficiently, the first step was to see, if possible, that the burden should be so equitably distributed that no individual person should have a sense of unfairness being dealt out to him. What was the condition as regarded East Ham? The ratepayer there found that the burden was five or six times as much as it was in some other localities which were carrying out the same duties. He believed that the Act of 1902 was passed with the intention of not taking away from necessitous districts the grants which they got under the Act of 1897. The Prime Minister stated more than once that the Act would not distribute the burden in the future to the disadvantage of the necessitous districts. But no one could foretell exactly how a scheme of this kind would operate, and now they knew that it was to the distinct disadvantage of these poorer districts, he thought they were entitled to ask that those districts should be put in as fair a position as they were in before the Act was passed. They were dealing here, too, not with a local burden in the ordinary sense, but with a national service—that of education; and, if in a particular locality, such as East Ham, the burden was so extreme, ought not the national character of education to be further recognised, and ought not further State assistance to be given? Nothing could be more extravagant for the ratepayers than our present system with regard to the incidence of the burden of national education. He should entirely agree that where the ratepayer contributed he ought to have control. As long as the level of education was determined by one body, which, he thought, ought to be the Board of Education, and the funds had to be found by another body which had no control over it, and, he thought, ought not to have, they would have a wasteful system, and one not in accord with fair and equitable principle.

Now, was it wonderful that, under these circumstances, friction had arisen in the poorer districts like East Ham? Speaking from the point of view of an educationist, who wanted education in this country to be raised to the highest possible level, it was the greatest mistake to impose an unfair burden on the ratepayers. A large amount of property escaped contribution to the rates, and it was only fair that all wealth should bear a share of the national burden in providing a system of national education. Although no one could justify local authorities in refusing to carry out their duties, yet in asking the Government to enforce those duties he would first ask what were the causes of discontent, and if they were well founded he thought it was part of the duty of the Government to do what they could to introduce necessary reforms. Those were the two grounds on which he seconded the Resolution. He hoped that the Government would say on the one hand that education must be carried out in East Ham as in any other part of the country, and he thought there was especial necessity in East Ham for that to be done, because in the poorer districts it was especially necessary that the system of primary education should be carried out. He also hoped that in enforcing that duty the Government would bear in mind there were real causes upon which discontent was founded, and would do what they could to distribute the burdens of education so that no ratepayers could plead that an unfair share of the burden was laid upon them.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Ernest Gray.*)

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.) said the House had listened to two remarkable speeches, the moral of which was a clear hint to local authorities, that if they only rebelled loudly and violently enough they could get the Government to do all they wanted. Might he suggest the hint to Merioneth? What would have happened if East Ham had been in Ireland? The hon. and learned Member had said that he had always laid it down that if these local people paid, they must have the control. He did not lay that down in 1902. As a matter of fact he not only did not lay it down, but he voted it down. The position in which they found themselves was the result of the slap-dash way in which a number of vital questions were dealt with in the Bill of 1902. Without any warning the Prime Minister came down with a long and intricate scheme for a special aid grant partly in order to commend the maintenance of voluntary schools to people who had not complete control over them, and it was pointed out at the time that the scheme would not do what the Prime Minister said it would do. They had to apply a system of finance to education in very seriously varying conditions. East and West Ham were not the extreme cases. The two extreme cases were Bournemouth with a rateable value of £90 per child and Gateshead with a rateable value of £21 per child. The Prime Minister decided by the Act of 1902 to abolish the special aid grant under the Act of 1870 and the further attempt to meet the matter made under the Act of 1897, thanks to the efforts mainly of the Members for the Forest of Dean and North West Ham. In lieu he gave them a weird sliding scale. Under the Act of 1897 West Ham got £18,000, but under the Prime Minister's scheme they only got £5,000 a year, and they had to provide £11,000 more than ever before for the voluntary school children. Of course, they did not like it. East Ham, as a matter of fact, did better under the Act of 1902 than before. The whole of the special aid grant, which amounted to £2,200,000, was spent by the allocation of 4s. per head all round, but there was no need to do that in all cases. The Prime Minister wanted to commend the Act of 1902 to localities by a lavish allocation of money. Then under Subsection *b* of Section 10 of the Act the Government gave 1½d. for every 2d. when the proceeds of a penny rate divided among the whole children in the area fell below 10s. The right hon. Gentleman was in reality throwing £1,000,000 away if, as he stated, in 1902, his purpose was to assist poor neighbourhoods. If he meant business he should have given the whole of the £2,200,000 to the necessitous schools, and then he would not have had East and West Ham coming to the House and inciting other authorities to rebellion. This was the result of the Government's bungling. East Ham naturally did not like it, but he objected to their coming down to the House and asking it to break the law. There was a remedy provided in the scheme of the Act of 1902, Section 10, Subsection *b*. That scheme should be widened and extended in its application, as he had urged in November, 1902, whilst the Government ought to find another £1,000,000 for the necessitous areas. He dissented entirely from the views of the mover and seconder of the Resolution as to the nationalisation of the education charge. That was a dangerous proposition to put to the people. It was true that education was largely a national service, but there ought always to be a local charge in order to secure economy and proper administration, local control, and local initiative. The margin ought to be narrow and should not be more than one-fourth, but it would be diastrous to say that the whole expenses ought to be a national charge.

*MR. DAVID MORGAN (Essex, Walthamstow) drew attention to the claims of Walthamstow and Leyton, which he said had populations of 125,000 and 104,000 respectively. Some 60 per cent. of the population consisted of the working classes who went to London in the early morning and returned in the evening. A large number of the children of these people had to be educated by the people of Walthamstow out of the Walthamstow rates. The education rate there was 2s. 8d.; and in Leyton it was 1s. 10¾d., while now there would be added a 2d. rate for higher education. The House would agree that this was a case for assistance to be given from Imperial taxation. He agreed that it would be a very bad thing indeed if the whole amount were to be defrayed from Imperial sources, because it would do away with local control, which was absolutely necessary and without which they could not secure economy or properly carry out the dictates of the Education Board. There were great difficulties to contend with in dealing with two bodies such as the Education Board and the Local Government Board, both of which had to be satisfied. The case of Walthamstow and Leyton ought to commend itself to the House because they had carried out the Act to the best of their power and without a murmur. He confidently appealed for assistance and believed the House would say that some relief should be given to those necessitous districts which had faithfully and truly endeavoured to carry out the Act.

SIR JAMES JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street) thought they were in a very serious position with regard to the educational question. Gateshead was in his constituency, and if there was a district that deserved to be assisted it was Gateshead, which had a population of 120,000, of which 90 per cent. was of the artisan class. They ought not to be called upon to bear a larger share in the expense of education than other districts. He hoped some scheme would be evolved to give the needed relief, and, personally, would do his utmost to assist in working one out. They ought to do everything possible to make education popular, and do nothing to encourage difficulties in those districts where the rates were heavy. In the interests of education itself this should not be made a Party question but one for the nation.

*MR. LOUIS SINCLAIR (Essex, Romford) deplored the fact that the mover of the Resolution found it necessary to dissociate himself from the actions of the East Ham authorities. He endorsed every word that had been said in answer to the allegation of extravagance that had been brought against East Ham, and he had obtained information which would prove that that borough had recognised its obligations and had endeavoured to educate its children as cheaply as possible. Instead of spending the whole amount authorised on their schools, they had kept considerably below it. East Ham had further been unjustly accused of providing unnecessary secondary education and of extravagance in providing education for infants. They had been compelled to provide the additional accommodation, and in doing so had only obeyed the law. If hon. Members would refer to his Amendments tabled to the Act of 1902, they would see that East Ham and other necessitous districts anticipated that they would suffer under it. In 1902 when the Bill was under discussion it was said that it would lead to an immediate increase of the education rate without any corresponding increase of efficiency, and it had done so. It was further said that it would encourage the formation of unnecessary and costly sectarian schools, involving a further increase in the rate, and that also had been borne out by the facts. How did East Ham suffer now? The Prime Minister at the time expressed the opinion that they would be better off under the Act, but as a matter of fact East Ham, which under the Act of 1870, as amended by the Act of 1897, would last year have received £11,000, only received under the present system £10,700 or £10,800; so that the Prime Minister's view had not been borne out, and East Ham, while it had had a heavier burden imposed upon it, had received a smaller amount to enable it to discharge its duties. A penny rate produced very little; the £15 houses of which the district mainly consisted had been taxed to the utmost limit, and the council felt that they were not justified in imposing any further burden upon them. It was not a Party or a sectarian question; it was simply that the poverty of the district would not allow of the imposition of further burdens.

In twenty-five years the population had grown from 8,000 to 120,000; in five years the number of children that had to be educated had increased from 12,600 to 23,000, new schools had had to be erected, and they had been forced to ask for special conditions to lessen the expense. The average education rate throughout England was at the outside 1s. 3d.; in East Ham it was 2s. 9d., and would soon be 4s., while the poor rate was 3s. 2d. for the half-year. He did not admit that the East Ham

Council had acted in so unconstitutional a manner as they were accused of doing. They had no alternative, and the position had been forced upon them. Conference after conference had been held without any good result. They had relied in great measure upon the promises of the Prime Minister in connection with the Act of 1902, but instead of being recognised as a necessitous district they found themselves on absolutely the same level as the rich districts which had no need of assistance whatever. They felt that they had a legitimate grievance; they fully recognised their responsibilities, and simply asked that their grievance should be considered. If any hope in that direction were held out he believed they would continue to administer the Act. East Ham educated the children, not for East Ham only, but for the nation generally. The duty had been thrust upon them, and the burden should be made bearable. That was all they asked.

While not altogether agreeing with all that had been said with regard to the nationalisation of the education rate, he thought the rich districts should bear the same proportion as the poorer districts, and that a rate trust should be inaugurated throughout the country, under which the poorer areas should be so treated that the burden would rest more easily than at present. The population of East Ham was rapidly increasing, with the result that there would be a continuance of this grievance. He admitted that the question would have been forced to the front even if the Act of 1897 had remained in force, but he submitted that the Local Government Board had failed to meet the requirements imposed upon the local authorities, and he blamed them for not having foreseen the difficulties which had arisen. He appealed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to see whether he could not find some means to mitigate the great grievance which existed, and to the Prime Minister to do what he could to carry out what he foreshadowed in 1902. If those necessitous districts had been placed in the position then promised the present action would not have been necessary.

MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH (Anglesey) said the last speaker was much more bold and uncompromising when speaking in the East Ham Town-hall. To-night he had contented himself with appealing to all possible Departments and Ministers, from the Prime Minister down to the Chancellor of the Exchequer—a considerable step indeed—but at East Ham he was reported in *The Times* as having said—

"It was the anomalies of East Ham and similar districts that made the working of the Education Act impossible."

The Opposition had always said the Act was impossible, and any convert to their view, even the hon. Member, was a source of great pleasure.

"He hoped the meeting would fortify the town council——"

That was a somewhat military metaphor for a champion of law and order—

"And that there would be no climbing down. They had taken up a position and must stand by it. If they had to go to prison they would go——"

And here came in the self-sacrifice of the hon. Member—

"If they had to go to prison they would go, and he would suggest that he should go with them on condition that his constituents brought them enough tobacco and other luxuries to make the condition bearable."

There really seemed to be a very grave state of disorder on the other side of the House. The hon. Member for West Ham must have departed from his views on this question, because when the Defaulting Authorities Act was passed with reference to Wales the hon. Gentleman took a very serious view of law and order. They then could hardly have imagined he would ever appear there as the champion of anarchy in East Ham. The hon. Member declared on July 15th, 1904, when Wales was concerned, that it was the duty of the Government to see that the law was carried out. How different must be the hon. Member's position to that of the hon. Gentleman who would go to prison. He could think of no worse punishment for either than that they should go together. The hon. Member then stated—

"It was their duty to carry out the will of Parliament."

That was a very fine proposition in the abstract so long as it was applied to Wales or to Ireland, but when it came to East Ham it was a very different matter. It was then the duty of the Government not to carry out, but to alter the law.

The great point of the mover and seconder of the Motion was equality of treatment. That raised a very large question. Were hon. Members opposite in favour of equalisation of rates all round? The cost of education was not the only national matter. What about the poor rate? If equality of treatment was the principle underlying this Motion, he hoped the Board of Education would go in for equality of treatment. If East Ham was to succeed, he hoped Wales also would have some measure of success in the steps she had taken. It was true that Saxon and Celtic methods were a little different. In one case it was a question of cash, in the other conscience. Of course the Government would have more sympathy with the cash view. The Prime Minister had taken the intolerable strain from the Churchmen and put it upon the ratepayers generally; but if the violent methods of East Ham were going to succeed in making the Government climb down, then the peaceful methods of Wales should be entitled to similar treatment. He asked the Prime Minister to treat all parts of the country in the same way. They were in some little difficulty in one part of Wales with respect to the Education Act; and three schools in the county of Merioneth had been dealt with, at least to some extent, under the Defaulting Authorities Act. If East Ham, by this step, a distinct breach of the law and of the Constitution, was going to succeed in making the Government climb down, he trusted that they in Wales, who had administered the law within the letter of it up to now would be entitled to the same treatment and the same measure of sympathy from His Majesty's Government.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, in a speech which contributed perhaps more to the amusement than to the enlightenment of the House—[OPPOSITION cries of "Oh"]—I am sure the hon. Gentleman will regard that as the highest possible praise—expressed some doubt as to whether the member of the Government who would deal with this Motion would be my hon. friend who is responsible for educational matters here or some other member of the Government. Had the Motion dealt with an educational matter it would have been my hon. friend who would have replied, but it must be obvious to everybody who has studied the case, even in the most cursory fashion, that this Motion has no more to do with education than it has with the Poor Law, and no more to do with the Poor Law than it has with education or with any other obligation the House may put on local authorities to carry out. Indeed, in the view of the local authority principally concerned, the borough council of East Ham, it is evident that the educational aspect of this question has nothing whatever to do with their action, but that they base the illegal policy which, in a rash and unhappy moment, as I think, they have announced they are going to adopt, not the least on any educational question, but on certain broad issues which go to the very root of our whole system of both national and local government. This is their letter—

> "In view of the heavy rates for national purposes raised locally, amounting to £113,234, being equal to a rate of 5s. 5d. in the £, made up as under:—Elementary education, 2s. 10d.; higher education, 2d.; relief of the poor, 2s. 5d.; this council, representing the burgesses, is of opinion that the rate is unjust, as the burgesses of East Ham are under present conditions paying more than double their share towards national purposes, more particularly in respect of education."

What is the claim made by the council of East Ham? It is that when the rates reach a point which they consider—and, I am far from denying, consider rightly—to be extremely burdensome, and when the duty is what they describe as a national duty, they have a right to strike against the rate, and to leave unperformed a duty which this House has put upon them. I do not believe the House will agree with that view. I am sure the Government do not agree with that view, and it is not one which we can for one instant accept.

I must just say one word upon two or three points which have been mentioned incidentally either as palliations of the conduct of this corporation or as throwing some portion of the blame upon the Government. My hon. friend who, in a speech of great ability and moderation, introduced the debate, and the hon. Gentleman the Member for Camberwell, both charged the financial clause, Clause 10 of the Act of 1902, with having substituted a far worse system than the one which was established by the Act of 1897, and thereby of having deprived the ratepayers of East Ham of money which, had the 1897 Act been allowed to remain in force, they would have received from the public Exchequer.

Dr. MACNAMARA: I said that East Ham was £2,000 to the good.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman is quite right. He did not make that allegation with regard to East Ham. The allegation has, however, been made, and I think the hon. Gentleman even went the length of correcting it.

Mr. MACNAMARA: Yes, I did.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman is perfectly right. The clause in the Act of 1897 and the clause in the Act of 1902 depend upon different principles. They also deal with different sums, and I may assure the House that under the Act of 1902 I believe all the corporations that were mentioned to-night—East Ham, West Ham, and other districts in the same neighbourhood suffering under the same adverse conditions—have gained rather than lost money by the change. It is quite true that we are approaching, perhaps we have touched, the point at which the balance will be the other way. But since the Act of 1902 was passed, and at the time it was passed, the financial balance was in favour of those localities, and not against them. They have gained, therefore, in the interval from the passing of the Act of 1902, and when my hon. friend talks of an additional burden thrown upon them by that Act, he is looking forward and not back—he is giving his view of what the effect will be in the future; he is not complaining of what the effect has been in the past. Let it be observed—and this is a very important point, I think, if we are to go to main principles, as I propose to do for the most part this evening—that the Act of 1897 made the assistance given by the public Exchequer to the local authorities depend not upon the poverty of that authority so much as upon its expenditure. As the rate rose, so the assistance from this House increased. That is a bad system; it must surely be a bad system. I cannot doubt that it is a bad system; and it really is a direct encouragement of expenditure which, if not extravagant—I mean to use no harsh language—is, at all events, on a very large scale. The Act of 1902, of which the hon. Gentleman opposite has attacked the financial provisions, at all events went on a better plan, as, indeed, did the Act of 1870; for the assistance given by the House under those two Acts depends upon the poverty of the districts, and not upon their extravagance. That, I think, is the proper plan, and when the subject of public assistance to local authorities is dealt with at a later date by this House I hope that of the two systems that will be the one adopted, and, if need be, developed, and not the rather dangerous plan which was adopted by the Government in the Act of 1897, and for which, of course, I take my full share of responsibility, as I was myself a member of it.

I pass from that point to one or two other subsidiary points which have been raised in the course of the debate. It has been pointed out, I think with perfect truth, that one of the difficulties of these districts arises from conditions which are hardly to be found in any other part of the island. I do not say that absolutely. Possibly, for instance, Gateshead, in its economic conditions and position, rather resembles East Ham and West Ham; but it is rare. As a rule the rating in any district touches all the classes concerned in the economic and social life of the district. In Manchester, for example, or in Liverpool, or in Leeds, or in any other great industrial centre, the rate falls not merely upon a particular district of the city from which the working population is drawn, but upon the mills, the warehouses, and to a certain extent upon residential property. It does not fall exclusively, as it does in East Ham and West Ham, upon the houses of the working classes. There is, indeed, an unnatural divorce between East and West Ham and the great London district to which they economically and socially belong, but from which for local purposes they are divided. I believe that the division is entirely in accordance with the wishes of East and West Ham. I think they strongly resisted being absorbed in the metropolitan area, and I daresay the metropolitan area might not, in existing circumstances, be very anxious to absorb them. However that may be as regards the past and the present, nobody can deny that part of the difficulties which these districts feel arises from the fact that they are wholly different in their conditions from other industrial populations, whose rates are raised from many classes — not merely from the workers, but from the places in which they work, from the great capitalists and companies by whom the industries of the district are carried on. Nothing of the kind happens in these regions; hence one of the difficulties from which they suffer.

But that is only a part, I have to admit, of the difficulty which it seems to me is going more and more to come upon us in the future with regard to local rating for public purposes. The facilities of locomotion are increasing every day. The tube, the tram, and the railway—the machinery for conveying working men and employers, and clerks engaged in our great industrial system, from their places of business to their places of residence—are becoming so perfected that you will more and more find what you are finding now to a great extent, namely, that the areas of your local government do not in any sense correspond, as they used to correspond, with the natural economic areas of a great industrial district. It does not affect the working class alone. It affects the wealthy manufacturer and the wealthy man of business who goes in every day to his business from a region far removed from that place of business. His local interest, therefore, is only an indirect interest, and, so far as his residence is concerned, he does not contribute a single halfpenny. As regards all classes this process is going on, and it will undoubtedly produce greater and greater difficulties when we try to adjust our rating system to the actual divisions of our local authorities. This is so as regards this and many other subjects, and that the difficulty will increase I do not doubt.

Observe, the discussion we are engaged upon has no relation to the educational merits of the Act of 1902, because it so happens, and fortunately perhaps, that the district of East Ham is not touched by any of the controversial divisions of 1902, which arose upon the question of the management of voluntary schools and in relation to religious teaching closely bound up with voluntary schools. Heaven forbid that I should raise those questions on the present occasion. An hon. Gentleman opposite called the discussion slap-dash treatment of the education question in 1902, but the discussion went on for nine months.

*Dr. MACNAMARA said he applied the remark to Clause 10 of the Act which was rushed through in a slap-dash manner.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It could hardly be applied to the discussion. Fortunately for the important issue now raised none of the controversial questions of 1902 come in. In East Ham there are only two Roman Catholic schools, and the great bulk of the teaching is given in provided schools, and the rate the borough council has declared an intention to repudiate is not for the support of voluntary, but for provided schools. Therefore, the only question for the House to consider is that of the obligation of local authorities to carry out the duties this House has imposed upon them.

Now I have listened with interest during this discussion to see if any light was to be thrown on this point by the various speakers, but I confess that I have not received much illumination from it myself—perhaps it is my fault. I should like to know is the House prepared to accept the view advanced with great confidence by at least one speaker that we ought not only to contribute to local rates, but ought to do so in proportion to the poverty of the district? I believe that it is a fair method if we do contribute, but you cannot stop with the education rate, nor do I think it is the main one for which the claim could be made. We do contribute to education now very largely from the Exchequer. I believe the contribution, taking the whole country, is between 60 and 70 per cent., roughly speaking. Now, my hon. and learned friend who seconded and my hon. friend who moved this Motion, are both in favour of what is called nationalising these public services, but they admitted that if you are going to leave localities with responsibility of management it is absolutely necessary to throw upon the locality an appreciable portion of the cost. This is plain common sense. I do not think this House would ever consent in any moment of insanity to hand over to a locality absolute control of public funds, putting on the locality no charge or penalty whatever for mismanagement or extravagance. I do not say that with a contribution of 60 or 70 per cent. we have reached the limit of contribution that can be safely given by the State. I do not lay down any absolute proportion, but I say the limit cannot be very far off. I do not know what my hon. friend thinks the proportion should be.

*MR. ERNEST GRAY: A shilling in the pound.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The proportion to the total amount is what I meant. What proportion of the amount spent by the locality ought to be contributed by the taxpayers of the country. I do not say it should not be more than 60 or 70 per cent., but we approach a point where it would be dangerous to go much further and leave sufficient inducement for that rigid economy which is not always practised in regard to education even now. In regard to Poor Law relief we give nothing whatever. I know there are certain small contributions, but I do not think I need go into them. Broadly speaking, the whole burden of the Poor Law falls on the locality, and falls more heavily on the poor locality than on the rich one. Are we going to lay down the proposition—I am not arguing that we ought not to do it—that the State should contribute, and should contribute in proportion to the poverty of the district, to the local charge incurred for a national object? I do not know how that is to be decided. But one point has not been referred to to-night which is absolutely inseparable from the subject, and which I think must be considered if we are to get local government into a healthy condition. It appears to be the view of all the hon. Gentlemen who have spoken that the localities charged with education have nothing to think of but the excellence of the education they give; that they have not to consider the means at their disposal to provide education, but merely to consider whether the education comes up to some ideal standard which is provided for them. It is said they cannot be blamed for spending this or that amount because the standard is laid down by the Education Department. I think, with deference, that is not accurate. That the Education Department is bound, when the country contributes so largely to education, to see that a standard is maintained is not to be denied; but will anybody say that had the Corporation of East Ham spent less on its schools there would have been any interference on the part of the Board of Education? ["Yes."] One hon. friend behind me said the borough of East Ham had been building two or three schools, and another said the fact that they had to build two or three schools more was the last straw which produced the present crisis, and they both suggested that the Education Board at Whitehall was responsible for the cost of those buildings. That was quite inaccurate. As far as I am able to judge, it was not the business of this corporation to build these schools at the cost at which they have built them. It is not a subject on which I speak with any authority. But I am told that the last school built in East Ham was built at a cost of £18 per child, and I am told that the average cost of the schools recently built in Leeds was between £12 and £13 per child.

Dr. MACNAMARA: There is the cost of the ground.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: These estimates are made irrespective of the cost of the site. There may have been some local circumstance unknown to me which justified the expenditure in East Ham of £18. What were they?

Dr. MACNAMARA: Cost of labour and materials.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am aware that the schools in London have been very costly, but I should require strong evidence to convince me that it was right for East Ham, on the verge of what it considered bankruptcy itself, to spend £18 6s. 10d. per head, when, as I say, in other regions it is found possible to build for a much smaller figure. Who is responsible for that? My hon. friend says the Education Board.

*Mr. ERNEST GRAY said it was important to defend East Ham from a charge of extravagance. In boroughs contiguous to London the London rate of wages and charges for material applied to them, and the schools had to be built in compliance with a whole volume of rules by the Board of Education.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think the Education Department would hamper my hon. friend or the Corporation of East Ham with rules which they could not relax in case of need. It may be—I am not qualified to say—that the whole difference between £12 and £13 and £18 is due to the difference of the rate of wages between Leeds and London. To me it is a startling proposition. I would like to have some evidence before I accept it. But I do not want to make a charge against any corporation without clear evidence that the charge is deserved. I should like to ask the House whether they think that an education authority should cut its educational effort according to its financial cloth, or do they think that an education policy should be pursued absolutely in the abstract, that a certain standard should be reached no matter what it costs to the ratepayers, and the ratepayers should come to the Exchequer and say, "You have put upon us too heavy a burden, now you must find some way out"? I do not think we can accept that. It does not seem to me to be in accordance with common sense.

I recognise that the burden of the rates in the eastern part of London and some other parts of the country is increased in consequence of the requirements which this House has put upon them—not in consequence of the Education Act of 1902, or any other particular Education Act, but in consequence of the burden of education which we have thrown upon them—in consequence of the standard of education required by the community. But if the cost has risen and is rising by excess in that and other municipal directions, how are you going to deal with it? It is very simple to say it shall be thrown on the Exchequer.

In the first place, the burdens of the Exchequer to a large extent, though not wholly, fall also on the ratepayer, and, in the second place, the cost if thrown on the Exchequer will inevitably modify your whole system of taxation. Unless the external circumstances of this country change more than I think they are likely to change, hon. Gentlemen opposite will not be likely to make those huge reductions in expenditure which they hope to make. The House will not be able to do it. If, then, you are going further to throw on this House all that the local authorities feel that they are unable to sustain, how are you going to get money to carry out the new obligations? Hon. Gentlemen do not bring together different parts of their own political creed. For instance, a great many Gentlemen desire to see the duty of feeding school children thrown upon the rates. I am not going to argue now whether that is a good or a bad system; but that the additional burden will be enormous is obvious on the face of it. The burden is far greater than can be borne. How are you going to meet it? Why, of course, the Exchequer. And then I suppose we shall have some further claim. The very people who, in their philanthropic moments, are urging this kind of expenditure are in their economic moments denouncing the growth of the national expenditure and blaming my right hon. friend for being unable to bring forward Estimates smaller in amount.

I hope I have said enough to show that the illegal policy which the council of East Ham suggested touches on issues which go to the very root of our whole system of public and local taxation. It cannot be considered in isolation. I think this House would be very much to blame, and the Government would be very much to blame, if, in obedience to any threat from any local authority, they were to give a promise for dealing with it except as part of a well-considered scheme. I hope my hon. friend who moved the Motion, and who represents the district, does not think I am unsympathetic with the difficulties of the ratepayers. Even if these ratepayers and their representatives have been more lavish than they ought to have been, I agree in thinking that the inseparable circumstances of these districts, so long as they remain isolated, put them in circumstances of exceptional difficulty, and, it may be, of exceptional hardship. But I think that is no justification for the authorities of East Ham, in the first place, to lay down the proposition that they have to carry out a great deal of work that ought to be carried out by the State, and then to say what part of the work they will not carry out and what part of it they will condescend to carry out. All local government will break down unless a standard of public duty is set up which would make such a course quite impossible. It is the duty of this House—it is our duty, to whichever side we belong, to do our best to make the heavy weight of public and local taxation bear as evenly as we can upon the shoulders that have to bear them. It is our duty to be as economical as we can, both in the use of public funds and in the use of local funds, and I entirely separate myself from those, of whom there appear to be many on the other side of the House, who think economy is a virtue that ought to be practised by the public Exchequer, but a virtue which ought not to be practised by local corporations. I do not hold that a corporation has only to consider the object and not the means, and that merely to say that the object is education is an adequate justification of any expenditure which can be shown, even in the smallest degree, to subserve the end of education. In public and private life the exigence of an object is not by itself a justification for paying for it if you have not the means. It is all a question of degree and of the adjustment of means to ends. But one thing we cannot do; one thing this House ought never to do; it ought never to tolerate on the part of any public authority the abandonment of the duties which this House has entrusted to it, because if we relax our principles in such a matter, we shall not only be doing a very poor service to the particular community which commits the crime, but we shall be committing a crime against the whole system of local self-government.

MR. J. W. WILSON (Worcestershire, N.) said that those who had listened to the speech of the Prime Minister must feel that this was not so much a question of education as of the incidence of rating generally. They must cast their minds back to 1896, when the Government brought in an important rating reform, with a promise that it was only to be temporary, and that the recommendations of the Royal Commission on rating should be carried out. That temporary Act had been renewed, and yet during the period it had been in operation the Government had made no effort to put the question of rating on a more satisfactory basis. This was not a question which affected merely East Ham. There were many other sufferers up and down the country who were equally bearing their burdens, and bearing them with greater patience and fortitude. What the Education Act had done was to bring into prominence the position which our system of local rating had really reached in the country, and to show that its inequalities, not alone in regard to London, but throughout the country generally, were such that localities could not stand the great additional burden which the Education Act had cast upon the rates. He thought this debate had clearly emphasised the necessity for the Government taking in hand the whole question of rating instead of being satisfied with temporary measures which might give slight amelioration.

MR. EMMOTT (Oldham) expressed his profound dissatisfaction with the speech of the Prime Minister. He was, he thought, a little mistaken in supposing East and West Ham peculiar. There were other places which were in the position of East and West Ham. His own constituency—although the rates were about 2s. in the £ and not 3s.—was a case in point. There was no question there of a population which worked in one district and lived in another. The population there lived and worked in the town where the rates were so high, and he was quite sure there were many other places besides East and West Ham where the circumstances were similar. One thing in which he did agree with the Prime Minister was that the discussion that night did bear on the wider question of our local taxation, and it was because our Imperial subventions were divided so unfairly, because the poor places got so little compared with many agricultural counties and many other towns, that the difficulty arose. That was the real reason why places like East and West Ham and another "Ham"—Oldham—felt the pressure in this matter.

He did not think that it arose from extravagance. The so-called extravagance arose in East Ham probably from higher wages and increased cost of material. But, taking the Prime Minister's own figures, supposing that East Ham spent £6 too much, that would only be £150,000, and the interest on that at 4 per cent. would only be £6,000, or a rate of 3½d. They were not complaining of a rate of 3½d., but of about 2s. 6d. Therefore he did not think it was extravagance in building that had caused this. For himself, as representing a constituency in very much the same position, he must say he had listened with great dissatisfaction to the speech of the Prime Minister, for he had promised nothing, and he had held out no hope of dealing with a matter that ought to have been dealt with long ago.

COLONEL BOWLES (Middlesex, Enfield), as representing a district which had certainly suffered under the Education Act, joined with the hon. Member opposite in expressing dissatisfaction with the answer given by the Prime Minister. They ought to have widened their school districts rather than narrowed them. The district of Edmonton could not be accused of extravagance, for it had built its schools for something less than £14 per head. When the prices paid in other places were considered, it might be said that they had practised economy. The rate in Edmonton must be shortly 3s. in the £1, and that showed something must be done to relieve the difficulties which were pressing on these localities.

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes 116 ; Noes,159. (Division List No. 150.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Barlow, John Emmott
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Benn, John Williams
Black, Alexander William
Bowles,Lt.-Col.H.F.(Middlesex
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Davies, M.Vaughan (Cardigan)
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dillon, John
Dobbie, Joseph
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Edwards, Frank
Ellice, CaptECS(Andr'w'sB'ghs
Emmott, Alfred
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Findlay,Alexander(L'n'rk,N.E
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.Herbert John
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir E.(Berwick)
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Harcourt, Lewis
Hardie, J.Keir(MerthyrTydvil)
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutchinson, Dr.Charles Fredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Johnson, John
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Kearley, Hudson, E.
Kitson, Sir James
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Crae, George
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Morgan, DavidJ(Walthamstow
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Moss, Samuel
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, Kendal(TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. Liverpool)
O'Kelly, (Conor (Mayo, N.)
Parrott, William
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Reckitt, Harold James
Reid, Sir R.Threshie(Dumfries
Richards, Thomas(W.Monm'th
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas

Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, Charles E.
Seely, Maj.J.E.B.(Isle of Wight
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Slack, John Bamford
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas, David Alfred(Merthyr
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York,W.R.)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wills, Arthur Walters (N.Dorset
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh.N.)
Woodhouse, Sir J.T.(Hudders'd

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Ernest Gray and Mr. J. H. Whitley.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt.Hn.Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J.(Manch'r
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt.Hn.Sir Machael Hicks
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bingham, Lord
Bond, Edward
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V C.W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt.Hn.J.A.(Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H.A.E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colomb, Rt. Hon. Sir John C. R.
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Joseph C.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes, Rt.Hn.Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt Hn.Sir J.(Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R.B.(Invern'ss B'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir A. Frederick
Gordon, Hn.J.E.(Elgin&Nairn)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. G. Joachim
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq.of(L'nd'nderry
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Heath, Arthur H. (Hanley)
Heath, Sir J. (Staffords, N.W.)
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A.(Stafford, W
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hope, J.F.(Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
Jebb, Sir R. Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred.
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt.Hn.Col.W.
Keswick, William
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Hn.H.L.W.(Mile End)
Lawson, John Grant(Yorks.NR
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Long, Col. C. W. (Evesham
Long, Rt.Hn. Walter (Bristol,S)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, R. J. (Portsmouth)
Lyttelton, Rt.Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis(Edinburgh, W.
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriessh.
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, Hon.J. Scott(Hants.)
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Ritchie, Rt.Hon.Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Rt.Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt.Hn.Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col. A.C.E.(Taunton
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und.Lyne)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H.(Yorks.)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

SUPPLY (5TH ALLOTTED DAY).

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1905-6.

CLASS I.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £62,400, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens."

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax) asked for an explanation of the increased charge in respect of Richmond Park and for information as to the control of motor-cars there. There had been a great deal of complaint because the drivers of motor-cars utilised the good roads in Richmond Park as a sort of racing ground, making it unsafe for children to be sent there to find enjoyment. He noticed that a placard had been put up with the object of mitigating the nuisance, but it appeared to him to have been ineffective. Would the noble Lord inform the House what were the regulations which applied to motor-car driving in Richmond Park?

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil) drew attention to the rates of wages paid to the gardeners in Kew Gardens. The wages paid there were considerably under those which were paid to men doing the same class of work in the public parks of London. He wished to ask whether the noble Lord, to whom complaints had been made on the subject, intended to raise the wages of these men to the same level that obtained in the metropolitan area.

MR. J. H. LEWIS (Flint Boroughs) expressed the hope that the noble Lord would pay special attention to the complaint with respect to motor-cars in Richmond Park.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich) supported the claim put forward for an increase of wages to the men and boys employed at Kew Gardens. He did not think anyone would say that the servants under the County Council were more efficient than those employed at Kew, and yet the difference in their wages was very serious indeed. These men had petitioned in the most respectful manner for an increase of pay. If hon. Members did not seize this opportunity of getting a reply from the Department concerned it was difficult to see how the question could be raised. The same difficulty arose here as in other Departments. If the men attempted to raise the question direct they were told that they must approach the Department through their superiors, and if they went to their superiors they were met with rude remarks. [Cries of "Oh!"] Hon. Members did not receive such treatment from Departmental officials, but they were not in the position of humble labourers asking a civil question.

And, it being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

LAND DRAINAGE AND SEWERS BILL.

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 5th May, 1905.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. James William Lowther, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Deputy-Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time upon Monday next.

Andover Lighting and Power Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Bristol Corporation Bill (King's consent signified). Bill read the third time, and passed.

Croydon Corporation Bill; Swansea Corporation Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Grangemouth Waterworks and Burgh Extension Order Confirmation Bill. Considered; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill. "To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Haverfordwest, Leicester, Scarborough, and Wallasey," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 202.]

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill. "To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Billericay (Rural), Eton (Rural) (two), and the Houghton-le-Spring and Hetton and the Rugby Joint Hospital Districts," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 203.]

PETITIONS.

CRIMINAL NEW TRIALS BILL.

Petition from Montrose, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

JUVENILE SMOKING BILL.

Petition from Montrose, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition of the Scottish Licensed Trade Defence Association, against; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Aberdeen (four); Alva (four); Annan; Ayr (two); Ballachulish; Ballisston; Banchory; Blythswood; Bo'ness; Bonhill; Brechin (three); Brydekirk; Cardross; Carluke; Cleland; Coatbridge (two); Coupar Angus; Dalziel; Denny; Dumfries; Dundonald; Dunoon and Kilmun; Dunoon and Rothesay; Edinburgh (two); Fauldhouse; Fraserburgh; Galashiels (two); Glasgow (eight); Gourdon;

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

Govan (two); Grangemouth; Gullane; Hotts Bridge; Huntley; Inch; Jedburgh (two); Kames; Kelso; Kelton; Kemnay (two); Kilbowie; Kilfinan; Kinross (two); Kirkintillock (two); Largs; Longside (two); Milton of Campsie; Montrose; Morningside; Mount Florida; New Monkland; Port Bannatyne; Port Glasgow; Peterculter; Rosehearty; Rothesay (five); St. Fergus; Sanchie; Selkirk (two); Stonehaven (two); Thurso; Tillicoultry; Turriff; and Woodside; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

Petition from Montrose, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petitions against; from Bishops Cleeve; Leigh; Kemerton; Oxenton; Tewkesbury; Tirley; Tredington; and Twyning; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petition from Montrose, in favour; to lie upon the Table,

PHARMACY BILL.

Petition from Montrose, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Petition from Ecclesall Bierlaw, against; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICANTS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petition from Montrose, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petition from Montrose, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

IRISH LAND ACT, 1903.

Paper [presented 17th April] to be printed. [No. 151.]

TRAINING COLLEGES (IRELAND).

Return [presented 4th May] to be printed. [No. 152.]

POLLING DISTRICTS (BOROUGH OF HUDDERSFIELD).

Copy presented, of Order made by the Council of the Borough of Huddersfield re-dividing the Lockwood Ward of the Borough into Polling Districts [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

BOILER EXPLOSIONS ACTS, 1882 AND 1890.

Copy presented, of Report to the Secretary of the Board of Trade upon the working of the Boiler Explosions Acts, 1882 and 1890, with Appendices [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

WEST INDIES.

Copy presented, of Despatch to the Governors of the West Indian Colonies respecting the West Indian Mail Contract [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Tenth Annual Report of the Local Government Board for Scotland, 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3363 and 3364 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Lunacy. Copy of Report to the Lord Chancellor of the number of visits made, the number of Patients seen, and the number of miles travelled by the Visitors of Lunatics between October 1st, 1904, and March 31st, 1905 [by Act].

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Refusal of Local Government Board to Sanction Alteration in Diet at Reading Vagrant Wards.

MR. RUFUS ISAACS (Berkshire, Reading): To ask the President of the Local Government Board on what grounds the Board have refused to allow the departure from the provisions of their General Order of the 18th December, 1882, so as to enable the

Guardians of Reading to vary the dietary of the casuals at the Reading Vagrant Wards by substituting an allowance of tea at night on admission in place of gruel; and whether the Board will reconsider the matter, in view of the difficulty arising from the uncertainty in the number of applicants for relief on any particular night.

(*Answered by Mr. Grant Lawson.*) The Local Government Board attach much importance to uniformity in the treatment of the casual poor, and consider that the dietary prescribed by their General Order referred to should not be departed from in the case of a particular workhouse. It was on these grounds that they felt unable to assent to the proposal of the Reading Guardians, and I am afraid that I cannot promise that the Board will reconsider their decision in the matter. I may add that there is a special objection to assenting to exceptional diets at the present time, as the whole subject of the treatment of vagrants is being investigated by a Departmental Committee.

Graduated Income-Tax in Foreign Countries.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the forthcoming discussions on the Finance Bill, he will be able to present at an early date the information with regard to systems of graduated and differentiated income-tax in foreign countries which, on 10th August of last year, he said that the Secretary of State would endeavour to obtain.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) The various reports which have been received are under consideration. They require considerable preparation, but will be laid before the House as soon as possible.

Importation of Pigmies for Public Exhibition.

Sir BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to the proposed importation of six Pigmies from the Congo Forest for public exhibition in this country; whether such importation has the sanction of the Foreign Office; whether care will be taken to ensure the proper treatment of these aliens, and also to prevent the possibility of the cost of their maintenance and repatriation becoming a charge on public funds, as has not unfrequently occurred in similar cases; whether the Foreign Office have ascertained that the Pigmies consented to leave their home entirely of their own free will, and whether they understand the purpose for which they are to be brought to this country; and whether such undesirable aliens would be excluded under the provisions of the Aliens Bill, should that measure become law before their arrival.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) The attention of the Secretary of State has been called to the proposed importation of Pigmies. His Majesty's Government have no legal power to prevent the introduction of the Pigmies into this country in the absence of proof that compulsion has been used, but Colonel Harrison, who is bringing them over, was informed that their importation for purposes of exhibition was very undesirable, and must be entirely on his own responsibility, and at his own risk. Colonel Harrison has undertaken that they will be well cared for, and eventually returned to their own country. He states that they have come entirely of their own free will, and wish to continue their journey to England.

Working of Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Act, 1893—Further Legislation.

Mr. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): To ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he proposes to introduce in the present session a Bill to give effect to some or any of the recommendations of the Departmental Committee on the Working of The Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Act, 1893.

(*Answered by Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.*) The recommendations of the Committee are receiving my careful consideration, but I am not in a position at the present moment to initiate legislation on the subject.

Infant Life Protection.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has received a copy of the report of Miss Frances Zanetti, a lady inspector under the Chorlton Union, of the facts connected with a recent baby farming case in Manchester; and whether he proposes to introduce or give facilities for a Bill to amend the law to meet such cases.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) My attention has been called to the report in question, and I shall give careful attention to any further information which I may receive on the subject; but I am not prepared to introduce legislation to amend the existing Infant Life Protection Act, nor can I undertake to recommend that facilities should be given to a Bill for that purpose.

Wages of Qualified Post Office Learners Attached for Temporary Duty Elsewhere.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork County, N.E.): To ask the Postmaster-General if he will state the amount of wages, including subsistence, usually allowed to qualified paid learners who are detached from their own offices for temporary duty elsewhere; and how long have these rates of pay been in force.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The inclusive rates, which have been in operation for many years, vary from 18s. to 25s. a week according to the local conditions.

Hours of Telegraphists in Dundee Post Office.

MR. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that it is the practice in Dundee Telegraph Office to give a number of the operators a duty of six hours on Saturdays; that the Department claim the right as a consequence to bring in these telegraphists on other days, and compel them to work a period sufficiently long that the aggregate of forty-eight hours per week may be compiled before permitting payment for overtime; that on the night of the introduction of the Budget thirty-three telegraphists were listed for overtime, although only twelve were required; that the men whose duties were listed five or six hours on the Saturday were detained to the fullest possible extent, while the others were sent off duty; and whether, seeing that the day in question was a public holiday in the city, and that the promise that in cases of this kind no undue hardship should be inflicted was not fulfilled, and in view of the fact that the Tweedmouth Committee ruled that all time in excess of sixteen hours in two days should be paid for as overtime, he will inquire into the whole of the circumstances.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I am inquiring into the circumstances and I will communicate with the hon. Member. I may at once point out, however, that the Tweedmouth Committee did not recommend that time in excess of sixteen hours within forty-eight hours should be paid for as overtime, but that it should be counted as time and a-quarter in calculating the total attendance for the week.

Central Telegraph Office Staff—Case of Telegraphist Booth.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that, in communications dated the 5th and 7th of April, a telegraphist named Booth, employed at the Central Telegraph Office, was informed that his retirement from the service must be proceeded with, and that his pay would cease after the 14th inst., in consequence of telegraph cramp, and that on the 17th of April the case was under consideration, the telegraphist having been sent for after a Question relating to his case appeared on the Notice Paper of this House; and whether he can now state whether the instructions contained in the letter of April 7th are to be definitely cancelled.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I informed the hon. Member, in reply to his Question on this subject on the 19th ultimo†, that the necessity for Booth's retirement was reconsidered on the 10th ultimo, and instructions were given on that day for his pay to be continued. That was some days before a Question on the subject appeared on the notice board. I have now given instructions that Booth should be transferred to another duty, and the notice of the 7th ultimo relative to his retirement will not be acted upon.

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† See page 580.

Capital Liabilities.

MR. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the total amount of the capital liabilities authorised to be created under the Acts named on pages 12 and 13 of the National Debt Account [Cd. 2065], 1904, but not yet created at the close of the financial year 1904–5; what is the total amount of such liabilities created and the total amount outstanding at the close of the financial year 1904–5; what is the total estimated amount of such liabilities to be created and to be redeemed during the current financial year; whether it is estimated that, from the abandonment of any part of the works authorised by the said Acts or from any other cause, the total amount of the capital liabilities created and to be created under the said Acts will be less than the total amount authorised to be created; and, if so, what is the estimate of the reduced total.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The total amount of the liabilities authorised to be created, but not yet created on the 31st of March, 1905, under the Acts referred to, including £2,600,000 authorised by the Cunard Agreement Act, was £14,513,960. The total amount of the liabilities created up to that date was £47,935,643. The liabilities which still remained outstanding at that date amounted to £41,664,382. It is provisionally estimated that further liabilities may be created during the current financial year to the amount of £8,000,000. The amount provided in the current financial year for the redemption of these liabilities is £1,684,801. I am not able to give a definite Answer to the last two branches of the Question at present.

Rate of Interest on Exchequer Borrowings and Consols redeemed during 1904-5.

MR. McKENNA: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what was the average rate per cent. for interest at which money was borrowed during the financial year 1904–5 under the powers to create capital liabilities contained in the Acts named on pages 12 and 13 of the National Debt Account [Cd. 2065] 1904; what was the total amount of Consols purchased for the redemption of the National Debt during the same year; and what was the average price at which the purchase was made.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The average rate at which money was raised for capital expenditure in the year 1904–5 was £3 4s. 4d. per cent. The amount of Consols purchased and redeemed by the National Debt Commissioners was £1,616,271 5s. 3d., and the average price £88·864 per cent.

Yield of the Land Tax.

MR. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer to what extent the yield of the land tax in the year 1904–5 was reduced below the amount produced in 1895–6 by the operation of the Act of 1896, which lowered the maximum rate payable from 4s. to 1s. in the £.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The operation of the Act of 1896 has reduced the yield of the land tax for the year 1904-5 by about £87,000.

Graduated Income-Tax—British Colonies.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in view of the forthcoming discussions on the Finance Bill, he will be able to present, at an early date, the Return relating to systems of graduated and differentiated income-tax in British Colonies, ordered on August 11th, 1904.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) The Australasian Governments have not yet replied to the telegrams referred to in my Answer to the hon. Member's Question of March 22nd,† but every effort will be made to present the Return at the earliest possible date.

Rights of British Indians in Cape Colony.

MR. RUNCIMAN: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government of Cape Colony has introduced into the Cape Parliament a Bill limiting the right to trade in the colony to persons who can write in a European language, including Yiddish, and whether the effect of this measure, if passed, will be to exclude from the opportunity of trading many of His Majesty's Indian subjects; and, if so, what steps His Majesty's Government propose to take to protect the rights of His Majesty's Indian subjects.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxliii., 784.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) I have seen a Bill introduced into the Cape Legislature which provides that the resident magistrate or Licensing Court granting general dealers' licences may, in considering an application for a licence, have regard *inter alia* to the ability of the applicant to keep intelligible records of his transactions in some European language. The Cape Attorney-General, in moving the Second Reading of the Bill, laid stress on the necessity of this provision in view of cases of insolvency, and pointed out that it was not necessary that an Indian should himself write or speak English. Similar legislation has been in force for several years in Natal. See p. 37 of the House of Commons Return No. 383, Session 2, 1900.

The Artillery School of Gunnery.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state whether it is intended to establish the Artillery School of Gunnery at Golden Hill Fort, Isle of Wight, in lieu of at Shoeburyness.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The reply is in the negative.

Discharges of Civilian War Office Employees at Portsmouth.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the effect occasioned at Portsmouth by the discharge of civilians in the employment of the War Office, many of whom have had upwards of ten years service, in order to make room for old soldiers; and whether he can say to what extent this practice as laid down by the War Office is to be carried.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The Question presumably refers to the civilians employed under the Military Works Loans. The works under these loans are reaching completion at many stations, and as a considerable amount of the work done under them is carried out by temporary employees, the services of a number of these men are no longer required. There is no question, therefore, of their being replaced by old soldiers.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. HUNTER CRAIG (Lanarkshire, Govan) in moving the Second Reading of the Bill pointed out that this was not a new measure. It had been brought forward by successive Members of Parliament. In 1884 a Bill specially dealing with Scotland was introduced by the late Mr. McLagan, but long before that date—as early as 1864—the hon. Member for the Camborne Division, who, with continuous zeal and heroic effort, had ever since then taken the lead in endeavouring to get legislation on this great national question. The principle of this Bill had been affirmed on three successive occasions by increasing majorities of that House by the following Resolution—

> "That inasmuch as the ancient and avowed object of licensing the sale of intoxicating liquor is to supply a supposed public want, without detriment to the public welfare, this House is of opinion that a legal power of restraining the issue or renewal of licences should be placed in the hands of the persons most deeply interested and affected—namely, the inhabitants themselves, who are entitled to protect themselves from the injurious consequences of the present system, by some efficient measure of local option."

In 1880 the Resolution was carried by a majority of twenty-six, in 1881 by forty-two, in 1883 by eighty-seven, and on each occasion the Scotch vote was practically unanimous, there being only three against the Resolution in 1880, three in 1881, and two in 1883.

At this point, attention having been called to the fact that there were not forty Members present, and the House having been counted, MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: There being less than forty Members present I now leave the Chair until four o'clock, or until such time as I am informed there is a quorum present.

A quorum being present at 12.52,

MR. HUNTER CRAIG, resuming his speech, said that when this regrettable interruption took place he was reviewing the past history of the question and calling the attention of the House to what occurred on three successive occasions when majorities of the whole House voted in favour of the local veto, beginning with twenty-six in 1880, forty-two in 1881, and eighty-seven in 1883. No facilities were granted by the House for passing this measure. On each of these occasions the Scotch Vote was almost unanimous in favour of the Resolution, thus deciding that this great social question should be left to be dealt with by the inhabitants themselves who were most interested and affected, by some measure of local option. But in 1893, when the Liberals were in power, the late Sir William Harcourt made an heroic effort to introduce a Local Veto Bill, declaring that "it was a matter dealing with a great national evil." He also reintroduced his Bill in 1895, but a dissolution taking place shortly afterwards brought the Bill to an untimely end. Then no facilities were given for the Bill, although from 1884 it had been regularly brought before the House, until 1899, when Mr. John Wilson, the late Member for the Govan Division of Lanarkshire, was successful in getting a debate and division. His proposal was negatived by a majority of English and Irish Members, though the Scotch vote showed a large majority in favour of it. No less than forty Scotch Members voted in favour of it, and only fifteen against it. It was urged in favour of delay that the final Report of the Royal Commission would be issued that year. The Royal Commission was appointed in 1896, after the Unionist Government had promised in the preceding year to bring in an adequate measure of temperance reform. Delay was consequently obtained by the appointment of the Royal Commission on the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors. In 1899 they issued their final Report. The majority of the members of the Commission, including eight members of the liquor trade, gave a very scathing pronouncement upon the subject upon which they had been engaged for three years. They said—

> "It is undeniable that a gigantic evil remains to be remedied, and hardly any sacrifice would be too great which would result in a marked diminution of this national degradation."

The House was, therefore, considering a traffic which the Majority Report declared to be a gigantic evil, leading to national degradation. That declaration affecting the national condition of their people was the most powerful argument he could bring before the House to accept and pass that reasonable, just, and simple measure, and thus do something really effective to diminish that "gigantic evil" declared by the Royal Commission on the sale of intoxicating liquor to be a "national degradation." Since then the Government had made no adequate or serious attempt to deal with the question. There had been a few small measures of reform for which they were thankful. They had also had that gigantic retrograde Act of last year which the Scotch people were glad the Government had not extended to Scotland. In regard to that measure Lord Balfour, speaking in the House of Lords, said—

> "There was hardly anything in the Act that would be welcome to Scotland. Some great principles of wide application were infringed by it, and he would regard it as a gross injustice if applied to Scotland."

He entirely agreed with that opinion, and so did the people of Scotland, and that was why this Bill was brought in specially for Scotland. There were special reasons why Scotland should be treated separately from England. In the first place, Scotland was sixty years ahead of England in temperance reform. Sunday closing had been in existence for over fifty years. That was a prohibitory Act to the extent of one day in seven, and no compensation was even suggested when that Act was passed, nor had any one asked that it should be rescinded. They had also the Early Closing Act by which all public-houses were closed at 10 p.m. The circumstances of Scotland were peculiar as compared with those of England in respect that the national drink was whisky, which was more deleterious in its effect and more injurious to the brain and character of the people than beer, the national drink of England. The frequenters of the public-houses in England to a large extent drank beer, but the people who went into the public-houses in Scotland were of an entirely different character. They were of a lower grade of society—men who were living under the enslaving appetite for intoxicating liquor. Notwithstanding all the efforts made in the interest of temperance reform they had been entirely inadequate to stem the tide of criminality, poverty, insanity and disease which was cursing not only Scotland through strong drink but the whole of their beloved land. The consumption of alcoholic drinks increased in Scotland 1·76 gallons from 1856–1861 to 1·85 gallons, 1896–1901. In the last forty years there had been an increase of 24,000 offences annually in Scotland, entirely through drink. These were cases in which the offences were attributable to drink, but when men committed capital crime or serious offences when intoxicated they were not called cases of drunkenness and they were put on a different list, so that the above figure was not the limit of offences through drink. In 1900 criminal offences in Scotland rose to the enormous total of 179,821, and no fewer than 114,207 or 63½ per cent. were due to drink. This was surely of itself (not to speak of the physical and moral degeneracy of their people through drink) sufficient reason why they in Scotland should demand an effective measure to deal with that deplorable state of affairs. There was another lamentable result of this pernicious liqour traffic, and that was the increase of insanity in Scotland. From 1874 the inmates of lunatic asylums had risen from 15½ per cent. to 24 per cent. at the present time. An overwhelming majority of the Scottish people, so far as could be ascertained, not only desired this Bill now, but had been calling for it for the last twenty years.

This was not a licensing Bill. It was a permissive measure. It left the control of the liquor traffic to the people themselves. If the people did not desire any change of the law then the Act would not come into operation. It was a measure to enable those most affected by the trade to control the sale of liquor in respective areas.

Mr. Hunter Craig.

It contained three options: first, a prohibitory clause; second, a limiting clause with respect to the hours of sale; and third, if no change was desired the *status quo* was maintained. A majority vote of the ratepayers—the legal and constitutional vote—would decide the question which would remain in force for three years. The plea, and the only plea, which was always put forward when an applicant obtained a licence was that the people desired it, and that was the only plea to which the Licensing Court would listen. Licenses were conferred as a monopoly to the licensees for one year and one year only without payment. The Bill simply left the decision to the people themselves, as to whether they really desired to have drink shops planted in their midst against their will and to the detriment of their home and neighbourhood, producing temptations, drunkenness, and social disorder.

Every section of the people of Scotland had declared by petitions and resolutions, and on public platforms in favour of this Local Veto Bill. Petitions in favour of it had been sent by town councils, parish councils, school boards and church courts. And in order to ascertain the mind of the Scottish people on this great question, plebiscites had been taken in no fewer than eighty centres throughout Scotland, including Glasgow, with the result that thirteen to one were found to be in favour of the principle of the Bill.

Then there was a local veto already in existence. To a large extent the landlords vetoed the sale of intoxicating liquors on their estates, and nobody considered that a hardship. It had been affirmed by many reports that in accordance with the amount of liquor shops, so was the amount of crime; and that as the number decreased, crime decreased, or as the number increased, so crime increased.

This subject of local veto, although it had not yet been adopted in this country, was not an untried experiment throughout the world. In every State in America, except four, local veto was in operation. At all events, 30,000,000 of people were living in the United States under local veto, about as large as the combined population of England and

Wales, and with no idea of giving compensation to the publicans in the veto districts when they were dispossessed of their licences. Local veto existed in many of the Colonies and abroad in Norway, Sweden, Scandinavia, etc., with most beneficial results. Then there were many legal authorities in Church and State in favour of local veto. The Convocation of Canterbury had passed a resolution very much on the lines of this Bill, approving the principle of local veto. And the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham in 1876 said—

> "The attempt to deal with this subject for the people, and without the people, has been a conspicuous failure. . . . I am still sanguine that the people themselves, if wholly trusted, would do something to mitigate the plague, and stay its ravages."

When the late Sir William Harcourt made his heroic effort to deal with this, the greatest of our social questions, on the principle of local veto in 1893, he declared it to be—

> "One of the very first magnitude and of the greatest urgency. Drink being the mainspring and the source of the poverty and crime and misery of great masses of the people, you have to deal with a great national evil. You cannot trust interests so vast as this, you cannot cope with evils so deeply rooted by leaving them to the discretion of any selected class or any delegated body. To form habits of moral obligation you must appeal direct to the conscience of the people."

This was not, and ought not to be, a Party question; it was a national question of the greatest importance, dealing with the well-being of our people, and it was sufficient to demand the greatest amount of concern from the Legislature. The *Edinburgh Review* long ago pointed out that—

> "Any trade, employment, or use of property, detrimental to the life, health, or order of the people, is, by English law, a public nuisance. And in suppressing it, the State assumes the right of sacrificing private interest to the public good. And this not only when the detriment is physical or economical, but also when it is moral."

The affirmation of that principle justified the right to extinguish drink shops if for public good. Regarding crime there was not only an increase of crime through drink in Scotland, but what they deplored more—if that were possible—was that drunkenness among women was largely on the increase. In his own constituency working girls years ago would not have been seen to go into a public-house; but now they went in in company, got drunk and spent their Saturday to Monday in the police office. Some one said that a nation might last on the condition that drunkenness was only confined to the males. He did not agree with that; but how much more serious it was when the motherhood of the nation was being cursed by this indulgence in intoxicating liquors! In his own constituency there was one bright spot in contrast with the state of affairs in regard to the drunkenness of women and girls. In South Govan there was a population of over 6,000, and there was not one police case per week on the average, and the apprehensions were only seven per thousand per annum, while in the other wards in Govan where public-houses were, they rose to seventy-six apprehensions per thousand. That was a concrete example of what they might expect in Scotland were the control of intoxicating liquors left to the people themselves. But the law was so constituted as to enable public-houses to be thrust on a locality unless a vigorous opposition existed.

There was a vigilance committee which went round and got up petitions to the licensing magistrates to prevent this plague being forced on the people, which entailed a great amount of labour. So far their efforts had been successful, with the result that crime was almost nil. There was not one case of crime per week in that district containing over 6,000 of working class population.

Well, what about the British working man and the extent to which he was handicapped by this terrible stream of intemperance which existed in the country? There was no man better or more able to do his work than the British workman, if he was a sober man; but the commerce and trade of the country were terribly handicapped through intemperance. To give an example which had come to his own knowledge. A shipbuilder on the Clyde told his men that but for broken time, largely owing to drink, he could build two vessels of 6,000 tons each annually, in addition to what his firm was turning out in the year. That was a terrible indictment, and there were shipbuilders in the House who could confirm that statement. The fact was that the plant was not only not put to profitable use, but other men were kept standing idle, and so the price of ships was increased in competition with foreign countries. It was the case that when a leading "gaffer" on a job went off on a spree, which he probably did once a fortnight, and was absent from the yard from Monday till Thursday, a whole squad of men were left idle until the "gaffer" came back—sober certainly, but terribly deteriorated in physique through his drinking bout. Now, they had heard a good deal of late—and they all rejoiced to find that Parliament was beginning to take an interest in these questions—about underfed children, overcrowding, and the increase of degeneracy among the youth of our population; but if the drink problem were solved, to a large extent these social problems, which were of the greatest importance to the well-being of the people, would be solved also. They were a loyal people in Scotland, and Members of Parliament from Scotland had come for all these years asking that this measure should be passed by this Imperial House, but without avail. But really their patience was becoming exhausted; and it was only fair that Scotland, which was so hard hit by the liquor traffic, should have this measure. Why should not the Government consent to allow this measure to be tried in Scotland as an example for what might be done in England? In conclusion, he hoped that all who were lovers of the people, all who were interested in the national welfare of this great country, would face the terrible evil which existed in the centre of the Empire, eating out the strength of the people; and that, before long, the blindness which seemed to affect the Government and the country would be removed, and that their eyes would be opened to see the enormity of the evil which existed in their beloved land. That was the reason why he asked the House to pass this measure, and he begged to move that it be now read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*SIR LEWIS McIVER (Edinburgh, W.) said he rose primarily for the purpose of most cordially associating himself with the temperance sentiments which had been so energetically voiced by the proposer of this Motion. It was most gratifying to an old temperance worker once again in this Chamber to hear such sound views, couched in familiar old phrases, and to know that while the views were practically universal, the phrases were still held in esteem in some faithful hearts. All the same he had been wondering, while the hon. Member was speaking, what was the connection between those views and those phrases and the seemingly irrelevant proposition which they had been employed to support. He had hoped to have heard some new evidence—some hard and dry facts—dealing with the proposition itself, some experiences and some results from other lands; because, although this experiment had never been tried in this country, it had been tried elsewhere. It was over half a-century since it was first started. Since then, it had been tried in many places and in many forms, and what one would have wished—what the House was entitled to expect—was that those who, presumably, had made this matter one of close, impartial, and exhaustive examination, should have placed the result of their studies at the disposal of the House. That, he submitted, had not been done.

It was claimed for the Bill that a Resolution to a similar effect was carried in the House in 1883. Well, that was a long time ago, and they knew less of this matter then than they did now. He was free to confess that, had he been in Parliament at that time, he believed he would have voted for that Resolution. He was engaged at that time in working in one of the poorest and blackest quarters in London, doing, in fact, what, in modern phrase, was called "slumming;" and what he saw then of the evil effects of excessive drinking was so appalling as to have the effect on him—which it frequently had had on worthier people—it produced a feeling almost amounting to despair, and a willingness to try pretty well anything that gave promise of mitigation. The evil was so pressing, so staring, so terrible that one lost one's sense of proportion. But, that was more than twenty years ago. They were now twenty years older, and ought to be at least twenty years wiser. At all events, they had twenty years experience of the working of this idea in other places. And it was some part of that experience —a conscientious and unbiassed account— that he maintained the House was entitled to expect from the mover of the Second Reading. He was not qualified to-day to undertake that task. He did not know the latest facts and the latest figures. But the facts and figures which he acquired some years ago led him, at that time, to believe that they would never hear any more of this subject—that the thing had been abundantly tried under most favourable circumstances and had failed hopelessly. They satisfied him that this well-intended temperance measure had proved, where it had been tried, the deadliest foe which real temperance reform had ever encountered. That the only places where it had worked at all satisfactorily were where it was not needed—or where statistics were wanting—in thinly-populated rural districts in one or two of the American States. That where it had been applied, in urban communities, the drunkard had become a worse drunkard; the drink had become worse drink, and that, in addition, it brought in its train other civic evils for which there had been no compensation whatever.

. The facts to which he had referred were common knowledge in America. For twenty years they had been open to anybody who chose to study them. They were embodied in a dozen reports and in hundreds of articles scattered broadcast to the public; but such material—apart from the laboriousness of its study—was always open to the charge of bias and prejudice. Happily the question had been examined, analysed, and dissected in the most cold-blooded way by a great body of distinguished American scientists, known as the "Committee of Fifty," a body of sociologists, examining existing problems in the dry light of naked truth. And they had unanimously denounced prohibition, not only as a failure, but as a deadly and corrupting influence against temperance and many other civic virtues. From one of their reports he took the following passages—

"There have been concomitant evils of prohibitory legislation. The efforts to enforce it during forty years past have had some important effects on public respect for Courts, judicial procedure, oaths, and law in general, and for officers of the law, Legislatures, and public servants. The public have seen the law defied, a whole generation of habitual law-breakers schooled in evasion and shamelessness, Courts ineffective through fluctuations of policy, delays, perjuries, negligences, and other miscarriages of justice, officers of the law double-faced and mercenary, legislators timid and insincere, candidates for office hypocritical and truckling, and officers unfaithful to pledges and to reasonable public expectation. Through an agitation which has always had a moral end, these immoralities have been developed and made conspicuous. The liquor traffic, being very profitable, has been able, when attacked by prohibitory legislation, to pay fines, bribes, hush-money, and assessments for political purposes to large amounts. This money has tended to corrupt the Law Courts, the police administration, the political organisations, and even the electorate itself. Wherever the voting force of the liquor traffic and its allies is considerable, candidates for office and office-holders are tempted to serve a dangerous trade interest which is often in antagonism to the public interest. Frequent yielding to this temptation causes general degeneration in public life, breeds contempt for the public service, and, of course, makes the service less desirable for an upright man.'

"A whole generation has grown up trained from early infancy in the belief that the law is their natural enemy, and that their special province is to connect themselves, directly or indirectly, with an occupation which exists in defiance of the very constitution of the State."

"There are three reasons for the failure of the police—the commonly accepted theory that it is not their province to enforce these laws, except when specially called upon to do so; lack of sympathy with the laws, which is quite openly expressed; the influence of the money of the liquor sellers."

"Labour leaders and others in position to know the habits of wage-earners incline generally to the opinion that among this class drinking is on the increase. As a cause of intemperance, especially among young men, was mentioned the dearth of good pleasure resorts and public amusements."

We are told that the "hard" liquor sold in prohibitory cities is of an inferior quality, producing the quicker and more violent forms of intemperance.

Then we also find a Judge of the Supreme Court declaring—

"It is a question whether the prohibitory law makes more hypocrites or mo e drunkards."

While a local Judge, in speaking of conditions under a prohibitory law not enforced, said—

"The value of the oath has been reduced 50 per cent. in this State. Perjury—for which the maximum penalty is imprisonment for life—is so common that it no longer attracts attention. And it is not confined only to the liquor element; the effect of it is far-reaching, and growing. People talk of it openly without a blush."

Turning to another source of information, we have it from a well-known temperance work by Messrs. Rowntree and Sherwell that it is—

> "A noteworthy feature of the history of State prohibition that, in every instance where the system has been applied to States containing large urban populations, the experiment has resulted in failure and the system has often been abandoned."

In Maine we find that arrests for drunkenness have risen, with fluctuations, from 16 per 1,000 in 1852–56 to 42 per 1,000 in 1899. Prohibition has been adopted at various periods by sixteen States. The number has now been reduced to five. In the last twenty years prohibition has been carried seven times and negatived thirteen times.

In Canada, since the passing of the Scott Act in 1878, local veto—

> "Has been submitted to public opinion in nine cities and seventy-three counties. It remains in force in one city (Fredericton) and twenty-seven counties."

Eighteen cities and counties altogether rejected local veto, while thirty-six, after once adopting it, on a subsequent vote rejected it. In Australasia local prohibition, at that time, was nowhere in force except in one district, Clutha, in New Zealand, containing two towns with a joint population of under 1,500.

And it is stated on the whole that—

> "The evidence from the United States and from other countries appears to be decisive that local veto will not solve the problem of intemperance in the great urban centres."

Properly presented, the case to-day ought to have examined the facts and allegations to which he had alluded, or, if possible, combated them with new facts and more favourable experiences. The House had heard nothing substantial in either direction. And, therefore, what they had before them to-day was the proposal to introduce into an old, overcrowded community a system which, happily for them, had been tried elsewhere and had failed. The truth was that, to use a favourite phrase of the advocates of this system, they were asked to give the people an effectual control of the liquor traffic, while it was proved that the proposed method gave no control. They were asked to approve of the belated revival of an exploded idea which had failed, because it involved an exaggerated and an intolerable repression of human desires, and it had failed—as all such attempts at repression must necessarily fail. Abolish this system regulated and controlled and it was replaced by clubs unfettered and unrestrained. The open house of refreshment merely yielded to the street pedlar of liquid poison. Unnatural repression always led to natural revolt. They had a somewhat heartrending instance of this truth only the other day. With the best possible intentions the Glasgow Corporation exercised a right, which it possessed, to close all public-houses on a general holiday—on Easter Monday—with the result that they made a very handsome profit on their tramcars conveying thirsty souls to neighbouring towns where the public-houses were open. These public-houses made a handsome profit, and the Glasgow police at night had their hands full. The number of drunk and incapables for the week ending Saturday, April 29th last, was 323 as against 229 for the corresponding week of last year, when the public-houses were open the full week and the number of "drunks" before the police court at Paisley for the week ending April 30th last was forty-one as compared with eleven for the corresponding week of last year.

There was one other fascinating phrase which was employed in support of this proposal as in support of many an equally bad cause: "Won't you trust the people?" The answer was, "Certainly, in any popular question. But what have the people got to do with the colour of my necktie?" He refused to let the odd man in the street decide whether he should have his herring boiled or broiled. It was none of his business. That was the central fallacy of this proposal. What right of interference had the so-called people with his personal convenience and personal tastes? Yet that was what this Bill invited them to sanction. Some of the best of them were too often carried away by the smoothness of a phrase. Trust the people in everything which concerned them, but he would rather they trusted him in a matter which concerned himself. And the point was that, in doing what was called "trusting the people," they were forcing on them the right to adjudicate on a matter on which they were not capable of adjudicating, and, as experience had shown, they very soon discovered this for themselves and repudiated the system. But, meanwhile, an infinity of mischief had been done to the social system. They had dislocated business. They had destroyed property and had generally disturbed the public mind and social arrangements merely with the result of going back on their tracks.

In his time and within his own ken, there had been three great movements of temperance reform: the first against drunkenness; the second against "drink"; and the third against "the trade." The first of these three had been successful—not completely or wholly successful; but it was the only temperance movement that had ever succeeded. And he claimed that it was a reform which had worked down through the classes of society—and it was ridiculous not to recognise that classes existed—from the highest to the lowest. A hundred or even fewer years ago, in the highest classes, drunkenness, so far from being a crime, was an elegance—almost a virtue. The reign of the great Queen changed all that. He need not tell the House how drunkenness was regarded amongst the educated classes of to-day. But he asked it to realise that amongst skilled artisans it was stigmatised just as sharply as in Mayfair. Example—fashion—what they would—had done this work. Opportunities to do something else besides getting drunk had been amongst the agents. One could easily quote other agents. The fact remained that excessive drinking and drunkenness had enormously diminished during the last fifty, forty, thirty years. But of the other two campaigns! Against "drink"—against "the trade"—what had been done? And how would this so-called reform touch any of these? Experience showed that it did not reduce drunkenness. Experience showed that it did not stop drink, but only deteriorated its quality and generated new crimes. But it would unquestionably touch the publican—in the interests of a certain class of dispensing druggists, of drinking clubs, of sheebeens, of street pedlars. Now, he held no brief for the publican, and he never had had a direct or indirect interest in "the trade" in his life. But he did recognise that "the trade" was a lawful trade, conducted by citizens of quite the average standard of morality, and that this proposal showed a complete disregard for the rights of that trade—rights recognised both by law and equity. But, leaving the "Trade" alone, his chief objections to this measure were that it proposed a gross infringement of the individual liberty of the citizen—that it invaded the domain of private conduct, placing it at the mercy of the odd man in the street, and that it was purely class legislation. It dictated unwarrantably the poor man's mode of life, and it left the rich untouched. And it denied to the poor man what he was entitled to consider his right of choice in articles of consumption.

Now, the only conceivable ground on which such a course could be justified was the general assumption—or, at all events, the assumption on the part of the backers of this Bill—that alcohol was a poison of so dangerous a character that at all costs it must be kept out of the way of the people; that it was to be legislated for far more stringently than dynamite or explosives. But was this the case? Was it a reasonable proposition? Did the backers of the Bill make this immense assumption? He ventured to think not. He had in his hand some exceedingly interesting sentences from one of the backers—the Member for West Aberdeenshire, whose absence they all regretted. In an article entitled "The Case for Moderate Drinking" in *Blackwood's Magazine* of June, 1892, the hon. Member wrote—

> "We must take ourselves as we are, artificial products of an artificial age, often depressed and worried, eating bad food, badly cooked, breathing bad air, and crushed down by money difficulties. It is at these times, when responsibilities are around us, and the troubles of the world begin to close in over our heads, that a cheering glass, in strict moderation and at carefully selected times, is of real use, and can be defended both by physiology and common-sense. . . . A moderate dose has some stimulant effect,

and may send up the pulse by a few beats and remove the faintness of fatigue. Generally and more beneficially, however, it soothes and rests, and brings consoling quiet into the routine of life."

As to quantity, the hon. Member declared that—

"In a general way we would advise everyone, with sufficient self-restraint, to regulate his own proper quantity for himself. . . . Everyone, speaking generally, must also choose the kind of liquor which suits him best. . . . In nine cases out of ten the man, himself, understands the outs and ins of his stomach, and can arrange his scheme of solid and liquid diet to conciliate his tyrant. Thus we find that whilst beer is the favourite beverage of many and is specially believed in by the working man, it makes some of us heavy and unfit for work, and we shake our heads sadly when we see it on the table."

Later, warmed by a sympathetic theme, the hon. Member grew really enthusiastic—

"Burgundy," he said, "is the king of wines and feeds the watery blood of the anæmic with red corpuscles and stills the crave of neuralgic nerve for stimulation and support."

Again he said—

"Champagne, which is invaluable to the weak and sinking, and the very pop of whose cork seems to give a fresh start to conviviality, sometimes causes sleepless nights."

But he cautiously adds—

"It therefore requires no more explanation to prove that we should do our drinking in a very systematic way."

And on the whole he gives—

"A scientific denial to the oft-repeated assertion of temperance reformers of the more 'rabid' class, that moderation in its physical effects is only one degree less hurtful than excess."

As to details he explains—

"A man has been wet through or thoroughly chilled, and comes home cold and shivering. A smart little nip, taken at once, will whip up his heart, relax the vessels of the skin, take off the spasm of congestion and send a warm glow through him from end to end; and although exact science tell us that this feeling of heat is rather apparent than real, it is actually felt." Because the blood "returns to stoke up the internal organs, and light a temporary fire which will probably prevent the dangers from chill."

The hon. and learned Member, after a kindly word for the *petit verre*, said—

"Finally, there can be no possible shadow of doubt that weakly and old people are often the better for a nightcap," and, "that judicious stimulation directly predisposes to longevity. All the most healthy veterans whom we have known take some wine or spirits."

He confessed he could not go quite the length of the hon. Member, the backer of this Bill. He was a temperance Member, speaking as a temperance Member, and he considered these were pernicious doctrines. They might or might not be scientifically true; but they had better not be said, and he would rather that no child of his read them. But what he asked the House to observe was, these were the comfortable doctrines of one of the comfortable classes who would not be touched by this Bill; but, all the same, they were doctrines which, if they were true doctrines, were doctrines of universal application, and that this Bill, sponsored as it was by the hon. and learned Gentleman, who did not hesitate to promulgate these doctrines, would shut out the working men of this country from everyone of the advantages which he so eloquently insisted on.

Sir Lewis McIver.

He regretted to have detained the House so long. It was only at the last moment that it fell to his lot to take a part in this discussion, and, consequently, he had not had time enough to be concise. There were many other sides of the question upon which he might well have touched. But he had no fear but that they would have ample justice done to them by those who followed him on this side. And he doubted not that the belatedness of this exploded experiment would be made clear. For himself, he repeated that he approached this subject as a temperance advocate. He repeated the claim that he was working in the temperance cause when most of the supporters of this grotesque proposal were at school; and he claimed that, where this or analogous measures had been tried elsewhere, they had hopelessly failed to further the true cause of temperance—that they had led to crime and a general moral deterioration in the communities where they had been tried—that they could only be made effective in thinly-populated rural districts where they were not needed, and that, in most cases, they had been abandoned as failures; that, in a crowded country like this, they would lead to similar evil consequences in an aggravated degree—

that they would prove wholly unworkable and lead to an evil reaction, and that, while defeating the ends of temperance, they would flout justice, outrage all equity, and would differentiate, in a manner absolutely unconstitutional and indefensible, the private rights of the rich and the poor.

MR. GROVES (Salford, S.) formally seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Sir Lewis McIver.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. THOMAS SHAW (Hawick Burghs) said that this debate had taken an extremely curious turn. A Motion had been made "that this Bill be read a second time this day six months," and, curious to say, this proposal had been made by an ostentatiously avowed temperance reformer. A good many of the high-sounding phrases which had been used against this Bill were now getting rather played out, and they now understood them in a different sense to when they were first used years ago. When a Motion by a temperance reformer from Scotland was seconded by a member of the brewing trade in England then the situation was very curious. What was the use of getting up a case against this Bill by citations from old books? It seemed to him that wherever a stray expression either before or after dinner was made by a public man, showing the slightest sympathy with a glass of liquor, it was culled and served up by the liquor trade in the House. He thought the way in which the subject had been treated by the hon. Member who spoke last but one was deplorable, and, indeed, it was clear that the hon. Member had not read *The Times* that morning and the report of Sir F. Treves's address to the Women's Union of the Church of England Temperance Society. In that address all the arguments of the hon. Member had by anticipation been exploded on the highest authority. What did Sir Frederick Treves say. He dealt with it not from its moral, but from its physical aspect, and he mentioned all the different points which had been referred to by the hon. Member for West Edinburgh. Speaking of intoxicating liquor, he said—

"As for its 'aiding digestion,' it hindered digestion even when taken in small amounts, as could be easily demonstrated. Then there was the idea that alcohol was strengthening. As a fact, it curiously modified the nourishment of the body; it greatly lessened the output of carbonic acid—a very important matter—so that the drunkard was necessarily an ill-nourished man; and to reach the acme of physical condition was impossible if any alcohol was used. Its stimulating effect was only momentary, and after that had passed off the capacity for work fell enormously. Alcohol, as it were, brought up the whole of the reserve forces of the body and threw them into action, and when these were used up there was nothing to fall back on. It dissipated rather than conserved bodily energy. As a work producer it was exceedingly extravagant, and might lead to a physical bankruptcy; and he was not speaking, he would remind them, of excessive drinking."

Then Sir Frederick gave a most striking illustration, which, he ventured to say, would much affect the mind of the country. He said—

"It was a curious fact that troops could not march on alcohol. In the Ladysmith relief column, which he accompanied, the first men to drop out were simply the men who drank. The fact was as clear as if they had all borne labels on their backs. As for the statement that alcohol was 'a great thing for the circulation,' it increased the heart-beat and reddened the skin by using up the body's reserve power, but the heart's action became emphatically weaker, a temporary effect being got at an enormous cost. The action of alcohol on the central nervous system was very definite, and was that of a functional poison, first stimulating and then depressing the nervous system. The higher nervous centres went first, becoming slightly dulled. The man who worked on even a moderate amount of alcohol was not at his best. Fine work could not be done under that condition. The use of alcohol was absolutely inconsistent with a surgeon's work, or with any work demanding quick and alert judgment. He was much struck by the number of professional men who for this reason had discontinued the use of alcohol in the middle of the day. The last notion he would refer to was that alcohol kept out the cold—that a 'little nip' was good when going out into cold air, and so forth. In the words of a great authority, alcohol really lowered the temperature of the body by increased loss of heat and to some extent by increased oxidation, and much reduced the power of the body to resist cold. Finally, he would say that the great and laudable ambition of all, and especially of young men, to be 'fit' could not possibly be achieved if they took alcohol. It was simply preposterous to suppose that any young healthy person needed any alcohol whatever; and, indeed, he was much better without even the smallest amount of it. Having spent the greater part of his life operating, he would say, with Sir James Paget, that of all people those he dreaded to operate on were the drinkers. He hoped that what he had said would help his hearers to answer such absolute fallacies as 'a glass of port can do you no harm."

That opinion exploded the whole of the arguments of the hon. Member opposite, not by arguments which but for the care and assiduity of the liquor trade would be forgotten, but by the highest medical authority whose opinion was given in that day's *Times*. That opinion bore directly upon this Bill because the leading proposition of Dr. Treves was "That alcohol was, of course, distinctly a poison. It had certain uses, like other poisons, but the limitations on its use should be as strict as on arsenic, opium, and strychnia."

The Bill was an extremely moderate Bill, and from the medical point of view was defensible in every line of it; only from the same point of view it was not drastic enough. The reference to the United States was a reference to something entirely different to what was contemplated in this Bill. The only analogue to a prohibition State under this Bill would be that Scotland, England, or Ireland should become a prohibition State. Why had five prohibition States in America abandoned prohibition? They abandoned prohibition, but adopted local veto. How did the case stand all over the United States? Out of forty-six or forty-seven States there were thirty-nine that had local veto and five absolute prohibition. The question here was not as to national or State prohibition, but as to granting to limited localities all over the country the power of local option or local veto for the purpose of checking the liquor traffic. Was local veto as terrible as prohibition? Local veto existed in many parts of Scotland at the option, not of the community, but of the governing landowners. All they wanted, therefore, was to give the community the same power as that which had been exercised by the high-minded, courageous, good landlords, without any result of debauching the respect for the law in any of the communities throughout the country.

Mr. Thomas Shaw.

It was said that the regulation of the drink traffic meant the increase of drunkenness, but the Report of the Committee on Physical Deterioration showed that this was altogether wrong in the case of countries, like Norway and Sweden for example, where the consumption of drink was controlled by wise legislation. The proposition which had been put forward was that State regulation of the drink traffic meant an increase of drunkenness. On page 34 of the Report on Physical Deterioration reference was made to the increase in the consumption of alcoholic liquors and the increase in lunacy and in the percentage of recruits refused as unfit for service. It says—

"Diagrams are also given illustrating a totally different state of things in the countries where the consumption of drink, owing to wise legislation, has been steadily decreasing, viz., Norway and Sweden. In the last-named, the reverse of the picture presented by France is complete. Thus in Sweden the consumption of spirits containing 50 per cent. alcohol in 1830 was forty-six litres, and in 1890 six litres per head."

A fact like that put on one side altogether the argument that regulation by the State meant an increase of drunkenness. Foreign experience was helping temperance reformers on both sides. The principle of the Bill was not new, for it was founded on the doctrine of trusting the various localities. The opinion of Scotland on temperance reform was shown by the fact that forty-three Members out of the seventy-two representing Scotland were pledged in favour of this Bill. Medical opinion was also ripening on the subject, and he cited the evidence of Dr. Clouston, the most distinguished authority in lunacy, and Sir F. Treves as being conclusive of the evils of alcoholism.

In face of the Report which had been made he wished to know what the Government were going to do to cure these evils. The Report on Physical Deterioration says—

"The question of drink occupies a prominent place amongst the causes of degeneration. The close connection between a craving for drink and bad housing, bad feeding, a polluted and depressing atmosphere, and long hours of work in over-heated and ill-ventilated rooms, only relieved by the excitements of town life, is too self-evident to need demonstration."

Mrs. Mackenzie said—

"I think that if the drink question were removed three-fourths of the difficulty and the poverty and degradation would go along with it."

And then the Commissioners add—

"Not only is poverty the result of drink but it becomes an active agent in promoting it."

Was this, then, not a case for an experiment to be made? They were following sound American analogies, and it had been admitted that the effect of drink on the national physique was certified in the Report of the Physical Deterioration Committee. He dissented entirely from the view that it was a novel principle to interfere with the habits of the people in the consumption of drink. They had been doing that all along; drink was not a free trade; it was a monopoly granted by the State under regulations, and in Scotland they were much ahead of England in respect of their regulations of the trade.

SIR CHARLES RENSHAW (Renfrew, W.) said he had listened with very great interest to the speech of the hon. Member who had just sat down, and he rejoiced to think that he had not drawn so black a picture as the hon. Member who moved the Second Reading of the Bill. When he heard the hon. Member for Govan say that Scotland was sixty years ahead of England in this matter, and then went on to describe the condition of Scotland, he was almost disposed to be thankful that England was lagging behind. He noticed that hon. Members who had spoken had not said very much about the Bill which had been submitted to the House. No attempt had been made to show the House how the Bill would work out as a practical measure. The Bill took no notice whatever of the legislation passed in 1903; indeed, it referred to the Licensing Acts of 1828 to 1897, although those Acts, he believed, had been repealed by the Act of 1903. In the Bill of 1903 a great measure of licensing reform was passed, and he did not think that they had yet realised the great benefit of that measure. He thought a great improvement had been brought about in the general state of matters by that Bill. The hon. Member for the Border Burghs found fault with the hon. Member for West Edinburgh for having brought forward the question of what happened in Glasgow upon a recent occasion. He happened to be in the neighbourhood of Glasgow at the time alluded to, and he knew that special trams were run all day to those localities for the purpose of carrying people out of Glasgow to the neighbouring towns.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cornwall, Camborne): Why did not they shut up as well?

SIR CHARLES RENSHAW said the closing days were New Year's Day and four other days, and they had to be declared, and after that they could not be varied. The days were fixed under by-laws, and that was the reason why one locality could close at one time, and another locality at another time. The Bill proposed that a poll was to be taken either in favour of prohibition or limitation, the area being a ward in a burgh, or a parish or ward of a parish. That, he thought, was not a practical proposal. In the first place, the decision arrived at, which was to be binding on a locality for three years, was to be by a bare majority, which was unfair, and against the recommendation of the Minority Report of the Commission, which preferred a substantial majority. In this very small area a bare majority was to have the power of enforcing its will on the minority, which might be a very large minority, for a period of three years. There was in the Bill no provision that in order to make the vote valid and effective a certain proportion of the electors on the roll must come forward and vote. That, he thought, was a great blot, and it was not fair to omit such a provision from the Bill. But was it quite fair to suggest that this was to be done by a bare majority? He did not think that it would be felt to be so by those in the minority. He would like to remind the House that the Minority Report of the Royal Commission, which had been referred to in the proceedings to-day, suggested that if a veto of this kind were taken it would have to be carried by a substantial majority. In the English Local Veto Bill introduced by the hon. Member for the Spen Valley Division last year, it was proposed that a two-thirds majority should be necessary in order to be effective. The proposal for a bare majority in Scotland was introduced now for the first time. In the earlier Bills, he thought, the proposal was for a two-thirds majority. Not one word had been said by the authors of the Bill as to the reason for this change.

He submitted that another impractical proposal of the Bill was the smallness of the area. Anyone conversant with the administration of public affairs in Scotland realised how much that would militate against the working of the system of prohibition if ever carried into effect under the Bill. A country parish might be divided for the purpose of parish council elections into three, four, or five wards, and one side of a street or road might be in one ward, while the other side was in another ward. Supposing that in one of these wards a bare majority were to determine that no liquor was to be sold there for a period of three years, the magistrates, who had to exercise their jurisdiction over a much wider area, would have to consider the wants of that particular parish, and to have regard to the fact that prohibition had been applied in one part of the parish, and it was possible that because they found the public-houses closed on one side, it might be necessary to open public-houses on the other. He did not think in that way they should get further forward in this matter.

There was another great blot on the Bill. Hon. Gentlemen who supported the Bill had not said a single word as to any proposal in connection with compensation. He would put this to the House: granted that this Bill was carried, what would be the prospect in any ward of a parish, or in any parish, of local veto being practically applied in that ward or parish, if those who had to vote knew perfectly well that two, three, or four of the citizens amongst them were going to be deprived without compensation of their means of livelihood? He knew enough about the clannish feeling in Scotland, and about the feeling everybody had for the interests of their neighbours, to believe that this Bill, unless some provision were made for compensating the individuals whose livelihood was going to be taken away, would never be carried into effect. Mark what the effect would be. Suppose a parish had four wards, in each of which there was a public-house, and suppose that by the application of local veto the public-houses were closed in two of the wards, the result would be that the value of the two houses that remained would be enormously increased. That would be an infliction of hardship and injury on two individuals in order to benefit two other individuals. He did not believe that public feeling would sanction that for a single moment. He should like to remind the House in connection with this matter that in the Minority Report of the Royal Commission on the Liquor Traffic, whilst there was a strongly expressed view that no money compensation from the rates or taxation was to be given, there was a proposal that a time notice of several years should be an element in compensation. What was the proposal of this Bill? The proposal of this Bill was harsh and arbitrary.

Sir ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs): No money compensation is proposed in the Bill.

Sir CHARLES RENSHAW said the hon. and learned Gentleman had entirely misunderstood what he said. He quoted what the Minority Report said in regard to a time notice of several years, and if the hon. and learned Member would refer to the Report he would find that while it was suggested that there should be a period of seven years in England it was also suggested that it should not be more than five years in Scotland. What were the provisions of this Bill? On the 15th of May if a poll was taken, and if it was decided to prohibit the sale of liquor in a locality, the public-houses were to be closed absolutely. He would ask whether a provision of that kind was not extremely harsh and unfair. It was a direct contravention of the suggestion of the Minority Report, and it was one which the House certainly ought not to agree to.

There was no doubt that whilst there were practical objections to the provisions of the Bill there were directions in which a change was desirable in Scotland, and in regard to which there would be a general consensus of opinion if the hon. Member for Govan would only limit his ambition to something less heroic than the proposals made in this measure. He did not believe the proposals of this Bill would really be effective in Scotland because the Bill was so drastic in character that he did not think the people would ever agree to apply it. But a suggestion had been made of a much less drastic and severe character, and that was, that an effort should be made to reduce the number of public-houses in those localities where they were excessive, so that the number should bear a reasonable proportion to the inhabitants of the locality. He should like to call the attention of the House to the figures in regard to that matter. There was in the Minority Report a recommendation that the limit with regard to population should be one public-house to 400 in the counties, and one to 750 in the burghs. He was not to-day going to express any opinion as to whether that proportion would be fair or unfair. Ever since a suggestion of that kind was made in 1871 by, he thought, the then Home Secretary Mr. Bruce, he had always publicly stated that that was the direction in which he wished temperance reform to move. What were the actual facts brought out at the time the Report of the Commission was made? The number of public-houses was one to 333 in Scotland, and one to 219 in England. But it varied very much in Scotland. In the county of Nairn there was one public-house to 2,251 of the population, while in the county of Kinross there was one to 202. In the burgh of Dumbarton there was one public-house to 833 of the population, while in the burgh of Auchtermuchty there was one to sixty. These differences were very striking. Those who, like himself, had been associated for many years with licensing administration in a particular locality had been struck with the differences in their own counties. In his county the proportion varied from one to 270 in one parish to one to 800 of the population in another parish. It was in this direction that he looked for a beneficial change. Localities could make representations now to the magistrates who constituted the licensing authority, and they would have every reason to believe that those representations would be carefully considered. A gradual change could be worked out over large areas, and in that way, as competition was lessened, there would be an improved class of public-house. He did not believe any legislation was necessary for this, although, perhaps, having regard to the largeness of the areas of some of the licensing districts it might be desirable that a larger area should be introduced in order that a poll for the licensing area might be taken. Any proposal to reduce public-houses in that way would have to be made on fair and equitable terms, and to have for its main object the establishment of general uniformity in the number of public-houses to population. He believed that a reform of that kind, which would be fair, would be a substantial reform, and it was one for which legislation was scarcely needed at all. If the Member for Govan and his friends would concentrate themselves upon that reform he believed it was one which, when brought before the House of Commons, would be met with undivided sympathy, and could be made of very great benefit throughout the whole of Scotland. He would be glad to see a moderate system of reform, such as he had suggested, carried into law, but he regarded the Bill now before the House as impracticable. He did not believe it should achieve the object which the hon. Member for Govan thought it would achieve, and for that reason he should certainly vote against the Second Reading.

*MR. LEIF JONES (Westmoreland, Appleby) appealed for the indulgence which the House was always ready to extend to new Members. He thought he ought to apologise for thrusting himself thus early into the debates of the House. This was a question in which for several years he had taken special interest. Although this Bill dealt exclusively with Scotland, the principle of it was one which he should like to see extended to England and Wales, and he hoped that very soon it would be so extended. While he recognised the claim which Scotland had to advanced temperance legislation he thought that Wales also could claim to be on an equality with Scotland in that respect. But he would not enter specially into Scottish circumstances. He would address himself to the principles which he thought underlay this Bill. In listening to the speech of the hon. Baronet the Member for West Renfrewshire he could not but feel that there was a very sympathetic tone in his utterances towards the object they had in view. The hon. Baronet might have given a vote for the Second Reading since most of the points on which he criticised the Bill could certainly have been dealt with in the course of the Committee stage. Less than justice had been done to those who had spoken in favour of the Bill. They had not addressed themselves to details, but had spoken in regard to the principle. He ventured to say that this Bill was strictly in conformity with the principles of our licensing law. It was spoken of by the hon. Member for West Edinburgh as an interference with freedom. That was an argument which had often been used in regard to this particular proposal. The late Lord Salisbury in a famous passage spoke of the "free indulgence" to which the public have "a right." The State in this country had not recognised any such right for many hundreds of years. There was not now, and there had not been for centuries, any freedom or right to sell intoxicating liquors in this country. In 1604 King James I. in a Privy Council circular letter exhorted the justices to suppress forthwith all unnecessary houses, and pointed out to them that—

> "By the law and statutes of this our realm, the keeping of alehouses and victualling houses is none of those trades which it is free and lawful for any subject to set up and exercise, but inhibited to all save such as are thereto licensed."

He did not wish to speak hard words of the liquor trade, but the fact remained that for 400 years the Legislature of this country had recognised that the trade was of so dangerous a character that in all its operations it must be carefully restricted and regulated.

What was the present state of the law? Prohibition was the common law of the land. Most of them were forbidden to sell drink in this country. He sometimes read the reports of those high annual festivals which the members of the liquor trade held in different towns throughout the country—the licensed victuallers' banquets. He read the other day the report of a banquet held at Leeds. The chairman of that banquet, speaking with the expansive frankness which came at such times, declared—

> "So stringent was the law that in order to get a licence a man must have the character of a saint."

Mr. Leif Jones.

He did not dispute it for a moment, but it was not enough to be a saint. There were many other requirements to be fulfilled before the sale of drink was allowed in this country. A man had to give notice of his intention to apply for a licence to the overseers of the parish. That was because, he presumed, if the licence was granted there would be more paupers for the overseers to look after. Notice had to be given to the superintendent of the police. There would be more criminals if the licence was granted. Notice had to be pasted on the church door so that the vicar and the church-goers might know that rival ministrations to those of the church were likely to be opened in the immediate neighbourhood. Notice must be posted on the premises to be licensed, and, lastly, notice must be inserted in the local newspaper, so that the inhabitants of the district might be aware that a new licence was to be applied for in the district, and in order that they might have an opportunity of going before the justices and defending or arguing against the opening of the place. When all this had been done, the justices had to see a plan of the premises in order to satisfy themselves that the accommodation was suitable for its purpose,and if the applicant had the character of a saint, then, and then only, the magistrates might grant a new licence on the one consideration that the public convenience demanded a new licence in the locality. It was only on that plea that licences had been granted. It had never been considered that the trade was carried on for the good of those connected with it. It was only on that plea that the admission of some to, and the exclusion of others from, the trade could be justified. It was on that ground that they as patriotic citizens submitted to the monopoly. It would be a gross injustice to prevent any man from deriving profit from this trade unless it was for the public good that he should not engage in it. In the old days the justices were the interpreters of the public good. He did not say that they were always the best interpreters. It was certainly not for Members on the other side of the House to argue that the justices were the best interpreters, for no sooner had they shown themselves alive to the responsibilities of their office than down came the Prime Minister and deprived them of the discretion which they proposed to exercise. The supporters of this Bill claimed that the public themselves were the best judges of what was for their convenience and their own interest. They claimed for the people mandatory power to declare their will in this matter.

This was not a novel principle after all. The hon. Member for West Edinburgh spoke of it as an entirely new principle. The truth was that the justices throughout the past centuries had repeatedly endeavoured to ascertain local opinion on the question of licences and they had frequently acted on that opinion. He had there an extract from an account of the Gloucester Petty Sessions in 1786—

> "At the Gloucester Petty Sessions, a petition was presented to the justices by the principal inhabitants of the parish of Pitchcombe, stating that their poor's rates before the licensing an alehouse in the parish were two shillings in the pound; but since two alehouses had been opened, the common people have become idle, drunken, and profligate, and have spent their wages in the public-houses, leaving their families to be supported by the parish; by which means the rates have lately risen to eight shillings in the pound. Whereupon the justices suppressed both the alehouses."

This power had remained in the hands of landowners up to the present time, and owing to the action of landlords, in London, Liverpool, and Glasgow there were districts where public-houses were to be found side by side with districts where there were none. The result was that in those districts where there were no licensed houses rents were higher, because they were what were called uncontaminated zones. The promoters of this Bill were endeavouring to secure similar advantages for the people throughout the country.

They had been much terrified by the accounts of what happened in Glasgow two weeks ago. When he heard those accounts he was reminded of an Act in force in Tennessee known as the Four Miles Act. An Englishman who rode through the State said it seemed to him that it was not a four miles Act but a sixty-four miles Act, for the limit was renewed at the end of every four miles. If the inhabitants of Paisley did not like the drinkers from Glasgow to come into their midst, let them follow the example of places in Tennessee and pass the drinkers on. That would at least benefit the railway companies and the tramways companies of Scotland.

Bills of this character had received endorsement from leading statesmen on both sides of the House. He would like in his first speech in the House to express his gratitude as a temperance reformer to the late Sir William Harcourt for the great work he did when Chancellor of the Exchequer in adopting as his own the principle that underlay this Bill. Lord Randolph Churchill, a statesman of quick insight, framed and introduced a Bill embodying this principle. Lord Randolph declared—

> "The main principle of the Bill is popular control of the issue of licences. It is alleged that you cannot make men sober by Act of Parliament. You cannot, it is true, but I will tell you what you can do. You can give the people by Act of Parliament the power to make themselves sober."

This Bill was now opposed in the name of temperance. He was thankful when any testimony was paid to temperance from whatever quarter it came and he could not forget that the Licensing Act last year was passed in the name of eternal justice and temperance. This gave them a formula by which to interpret those professions. There were two bodies of experts on this question—the temperance societies on the one hand, and the drink trade on the other. What was the attitude of those two bodies? All the men and women of the temperance societies supported this measure, and the drink trade were in a body against it. The temperance societies knew from experience that this measure provided the one power that would enable the people to deliver themselves from the evils of the drink traffic, and for the same reason the members of the trade were opposing it with all their might. It had been said that the measure would not be put in force where it was most needed. He thought that even the victims of the drink traffic would support the closing of houses which were a temptation to them. It was true that in moments of excess they would not do so, but in moments of sobriety they might do so.

> "Tasks in hours of insight willed,
> May be through hours of gloom fulfilled."

If the opponents of the measure thought it would not be put in force, why not let it pass? It was optional, and it would not take effect where the people did not want it. He thought they opposed it for the reason that even if it were not enforced it would be one of the most effective weapons for the better control of the liquor traffic. The *Morning Advertiser* a few days ago in a leader on the deputation that waited on the Liberal Leader in regard to licensing matters said—

> "The local veto spirit is capable of working an infinity of mischief short of the full accomplishment of its purposes."

It was precisely that "infinity of mischief" which the liquor trade was afraid of. They knew that if the power were once put into the hands of the people of closing houses it would have an immense effect in screwing up the standard of the liquor trade and making them realise that if they outraged the feeling of the people they would do so at the peril of losing their licences.

This Bill was in the direction of legislation on the subject the whole world over. It was continually thrown in their teeth that this was an un-English measure. The fact was that the most conspicuous thing about an Englishman was his capacity to swallow, and that did not by any means apply only to liquor. He was willing to swallow any good institution he saw flourishing in any part of the world. If hon. Members would reflect they would see how much comfort and convenience we owed to foreign countries. We introduced many things in this country, and they flourished as on their native soil. We had imported tobacco, Normans, tea, potatoes, horses, mathematics — in fact, most of the things which made up the comfort and pleasure of our life at present had been imported, and when brought to this country they had flourished. But, as a matter of fact, the principle laid down in this Bill was a purely English principle, and absolutely consistent with those principles of local self-government which were the peculiar mark of Englishmen wherever they went. Except in this country, throughout the English-speaking world this law was in operation. He remembered going to a New England town meeting, where the people annually settled the affairs of their village, and one of the matters discussed which struck him and which was decided by a vote for or against—was the issue of public-house licences for the coming year. Throughout the English-speaking world this power was in the hands of the people themselves. And what had been the result? If they sought out the soberest countries in the world, it was those where the people had in their hands this power of local option. Over the whole of Canada the local option law was in force. That had been challenged in the course of the debate, but he found that Prince Edward Island was in 1903 under prohibition. In Nova Scotia there was local prohibition in sixteen out of eighteen counties; in New Brunswick in nine out of fourteen counties; in Quebec 600 municipalities out of 900 had prohibition; in Ontario there had been a steady reduction of licences on account of local option; and the same applied all over Canada. In New Zealand, where the people had the power of local option, there had been a steady growth of opinion in favour of the reduction of licences, and at the election in 1902 there were six districts from which licences were excluded. There was to be another election this year, and he would be very much surprised if more districts did not vote "No licence." He could not close this part of his argument without a reference to Norway and Sweden. These countries forty or fifty years ago were notoriously the most drunken in Europe; to-day they were the soberest, and that was because a local option law had been enforced.

Mr. Leif Jones.

Of drink it was profoundly true that "the means to do ill deeds makes ill deeds done." The removal of temptation from the people should be the aim of statesmanship in this country. He had been very much struck with a case tried at Bow Street Police Court the other day. A man named Henry Davis, who had thirty-four convictions recorded against him since 1897, was tried for some offence. Mr. Marshall put this question to the prisoner—

> "What public-house did you go to?"

The answer was—

> "The nearest, guv'nor, the nearest. I don't waste no time when I'm going to have a drink; but opportunity is a fine thing."

There they had the case in a nutshell; and therefore they claimed from this House consideration for those temperance movements which consisted in the removal of temptations from the people. He had been very much surprised to read a speech by a Bishop in which he said that he could not join in the crusade against public-houses—

> "Because he held that the removal of temptation was not the highest form of virtue. They certainly did not make a man absolutely virtuous when they put all temptation out of his way."

It would be unbecoming in him and presumptuous to enter into a theological argument with a Bishop; but he must confess that this doctrine was odd to come from the mouth of one who daily prayed, "Lead us not into temptation." For the comfort of the Bishop he thought that if every public-house were removed there would be ample temptation in the world and enough evil in the mysterious nature of man to provide full occupation for all the Bishops in Christendom. He urged them not to expect too much from this measure if it passed into law. A change of habits took time to operate, and any reform was a work of slow progress; but all who had studied the problem of intemperance knew that if they were to engage successfully in fighting these evils they must rouse the will of the people; they must summon to their aid that democratic principle by which alone they could solve the problem of enabling the mass of the people to lead a higher and a nobler life. The licensing laws, the restrictions, the efforts of reformers had failed to save the people. He implored the House of Commons not to reject this Bill, but to place in the hands of the people a weapon by which they might save themselves.

SIR MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbrightshire) said he hoped he might be permitted as an old Member to congratulate the hon. Gentleman on the speech which he had delivered, and the House on the admirable acquisition the hon. Gentleman had made to their numbers. The only criticism he would dare to make of that speech was that the hon. Gentleman had occupied the time of the House too long. He wished not to make a long speech, but to state his views on the question: Was this Bill likely to be a really practical measure, operating for good, or was it not? He confessed he agreed with most of what was said by the hon. Member who moved the Second Reading. All, on both sides of the House, deplored the temptations to drink and pitied the victims of it: and they trusted that some means would be taken to reduce the number of public-houses in their own country; but would this permissive Bill accomplish that object? He had voted on different occasions for a permissive Bill and, in fact, had himself brought in such a measure, but his own experience was that, except in some rural districts, there was not much interest taken in these Bills by the working classes. In fact, he believed that most of them would like to have not fewer but more public-houses. He lived in a parish where there were very few public-houses and one licence was taken away. Down came the rent of the house 50 per cent. It had been the only public-house in a very wide district and what was the consequence? In some respects good and in other respects not so good. It was good in preventing young men going to the public-house and treating each other to drink, and instead of walking three miles to get a drink they walked home. On the other hand, bakers' and butchers' carts now brought the drink to the cottages. It was very difficult to fix responsibility for that on any individual, because it was done with great secrecy. He bought a public-house once with the intention of pulling it down. There was no other public-house within eight miles one way and five miles the other, and there was a great uproar in the countryside. Travellers, after driving sixteen or eighteen miles, naturally wanted some refreshment for their horses and themselves, and they considered it a great hardship that the public-house which was on the main road should be pulled down. So he took a plébiscite, on the school board register, and was somewhat mortified to find that the enormous majority, including the women, were in favour of keeping the house open. He believed that the people, if they had their way, would have more and not fewer public-houses.

No Veto Bill would have any practical effect unless it included a system of compensation for owners when licences were suppressed. It would be an intolerable injustice to deprive a man of his property, when he carried on a lawful business, simply because, in the opinion of a number of well intentioned people, it would be in the public interest to do so. It would be absolutely impossible to carry out such a policy in a small parish. The only fair and practical method of effecting a reduction in the number of licences would be upon a system of compensation similar to that which had been applied in the English Act of last session. He had been in the United States and had seen the Maine Liquor Law abused, although he believed it was better carried out now. However, he would not argue that matter on this occasion. He believed that it would be impossible to carry out this measure in small parishes, for a public-house would be at once started in the next parish. He believed with the hon. Member for Renfrewshire that the only fair way to reduce public-houses was to provide compensation for the licences taken away. Feeling the deepest sympathy with the temperance cause, he could not vote for a Bill which he was convinced would prove worthless.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON said that his hon. friend who had just sat down was not quite so old as he was. When the hon. Baronet got to his age he would give up prophecying as to what the people of this country would do. They had disappointed him over and over again. He was not going to say now—he had never said it at any time—that he was quite sure when the people had the power they would do away with all liquor shops. He was an old agitator, and he had said, as he said now, that it was the right of the people to do as they pleased in this matter, and it was upon that ground, and that ground only, that he supported this Bill. The idea was that the people themselves knew their own needs and wishes better than any outsiders. The man who wore the shoe knew where it was pinching; and the inhabitants of a district must know their own minds.

What was wanted was to give them the chance of saying whether they wanted a particular kind of public-house. The only objection he had to the present public-house was that it was a place where drink was sold. He did not want to shut up a public-house, but only to take the drink away from it. The authority of the *Edinburgh Review* had been already quoted; that magazine said that the liquor trade was a nuisance socially, politically, and morally; but he would give another quotation and that was from *The Times*. That great newspaper some years ago said—

> "It would be impossible to find anything which stands for so much loss to soul, body, and estate as the public-house. It is a huge nuisance and misery. There is not a vice or a disease or a disaster or a calamity of any kind which has not its frequent rise in the public-house. It degrades, brutalises, and ruins a large fraction of the British people."

That was very good for *The Times*. He had never heard anything stronger than that from the leading organ of public opinion in this country. It might be said that that was a long time ago, and that things were not so bad now; and that a great deal had been done to ameliorate the liquor trade since then. Soon after coming into this House he remembered a right hon. friend making his maiden speech in which he used the expression that it was the duty of Parliament to turn the licensing system from a curse into a blessing. That was very well put. His right hon. friend had seen many efforts made by good and great men to turn the licensing system from a curse into a blessing. Philanthropists, philosophers, patriots, and politicians had addressed themselves to the task of turning the licensing system from a curse to a blessing, but with what result? A Royal Commission on the liquor business, composed of a third trade representatives, a third temperance reformers, and a third consisting of Christians at large, had declared the evil so gigantic that to remove it no effort would be too great; and only the day before Sir F. Treves, the greatest authority in the medical world—it was almost providential that he should have given this strong argument the day before this debate—had found it necessary to again remind the public that—

> "Alcohol is an insidious poison, and that limitations on its use should be as strict as on arsenic, opium, and strychnia."

If that was so, in the opinion of a high authority, was there not justification for saying the people should have the right to protect themselves against it?

They heard quotations about what happened in prohibition districts and so forth; but they did not get very accurate information. He maintained that whenever liquor prohibition had received a fair trial, great success had resulted. True, prohibition was not always enforced, as might be seen in the American illustration, where a man was asked, "Are you in favour of the Maine Law?" and the rejoinder, "Yes, but I'm agin its enforcement." All he would say in support of his hon. friend was that wherever public opinion and honest officials had been at the back of local prohibition, there it had been a great success. He would mention one fact, that the amount of alcohol consumed in the United States was only one-half per head of that consumed in the United Kingdom. He would tell what the Bill before the House did not do. It did not enact any fresh penalties on anybody. It did not run counter to our canons of local self-government. It simply allowed the inhabitants of a district to inform the magistrates whether they wished to be emancipated from drink shops or not. Any reform which crystallised the public opinion of a locality into law was the very essence of freedom. If the Bill became law it would have the effect of giving the opportunity to remove temptations from the people which he believed the people would be thankful for. Let the people have the same power as the landlords had now, because it concerned them more than the landlords. It was probably true that if, in respect of liquor supply, one place was dry, another place would grow wetter. An object-lesson of that fact was seen a short time ago in Scotland, when the magistrates of Glasgow closed the public-houses on Easter Monday. What was the result? All the soakers, topers, rowdies, the horse, foot, and artillery of the drinking band, went by tram-car to the neighbouring towns to procure the drink impossible to be obtained in Glasgow. These people created such a hullabaloo in Paisley that the publicans took the action that the magistrates should have taken and closed their houses.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham): Because all the liquor was sold.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON said that that was his information. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman knew more about the drink traffic than he did. At any rate, Glasgow that day became dry and Paisley wet; Glasgow was at rest and Paisley was a pandemonium.

It was all nonsense to talk about prohibition not prohibiting. Of course it did not when it was not acted on, but he could tell the House a story where it did prohibit. A Kentucky colonel once fell into the Mississippi and was nearly drowned, but they fished him out and brought him round, and when first able to speak he asked, "Where am I?" and they said, "On the bank." He said, "Which side," and they said, "Texas." Whereupon he murmured, "Prohibition State, throw me in again." Another extraordinary argument that had been used was that this power of doing away with the drink shops would be used by the topers and the soakers to increase their number, that they would be the people least likely to try and get rid of this drink fiend. He believed that there was a desire in this country to improve, and that even the old drinkers, who were perhaps more helpless than they were credited with being, had also a desire to improve. He had read recently of a place where they had local option and where the people were asked to give a vote on the question of drink or no drink, and to the surprise of every one all the old topers and soakers came up and voted against drink. Asked why they voted against the drink of which they were so fond they answered, "It will not help us, our day is gone, but it may save the boys." His hon. friend in charge of the Bill wanted to save the boys of Scotland, and he himself desired to help in saving them, and he hoped that the House would help them to achieve that good end.

One of the most interesting debates which they had had in the House that session was when his hon. friend the Member for Camberwell and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University brought forward the question of the underfed children. Everybody who had a heart must have had it wrung when he heard of the alarming numbers of underfed children who went to the schools, but every man in the House knew perfectly well that if they had inquired into the circumstances of those underfed children not one in a hundred would be found to be the child of teetotal parents. That question was not raised in the debate, they were too cautious to refer to it, and the hon. Member for North Islington ought to be congratulated for the courage he showed on that occasion. When no one would speak of the cause he got up boldly and showed that it was the drinking of the parents that caused the misery of the children. That showed that this question of drink came into everything somewhere, and that it permeated and aggravated every evil from which the nation suffered. It was as true now as it was when Mrs. Davenport Hill called attention to the fact, that it was a strange thing that in whatever direction one turned with a desire to benefit the people of this country that there the drink demon started up and blocked the way. This year or next year or some time hon. Members on both sides of the House would go down to their constituents and say that what the country really needed was social reform. What did social reform mean? It meant doing something to help to make the people better, happier, and holier. If social reform did not mean that it was a sham or a delusion. They could not carry out any social reform on any great scale or on any scale at all without striking at the great power of the liquor traffic. Persons who lived in these bad houses, crowded and huddled up together, were not teetotalers; it was drink which caused people to live in bad houses. Then there was gambling; that was another reform that was required. It was notorious that the public-house was in many cases only the ante-room for the bookmaker. Then there was sanitary reform, but where bad drainage and sewer gas killed its thousands of victims drink killed its tens of thousands. He appealed to the House to give the people this power so that they might exercise it for the benefit of themselves, their children, and their country, and thus place a weapon in the hands of the people which would enable them to overthrow their greatest enemy. He thought if this Bill were passed this House might rest on the strong and well-grounded hope that they had done something to start the nation on a better and purer path than it had ever trod before.

*THE LORD-ADVOCATE (Mr. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgton) said he agreed with many of those who had spoken that this question could not be treated, and ought not to be, as in any sense a Party question. For his part, he had never regarded it as such. On the other hand, he did not quite see the relevancy of many of the arguments that had been adduced in the direction of exposing the evils of intemperance, because he took it there was no one in the House who did not recognise and deplore those evils, and who was not ready to do anything which to the best of his belief would conduce to their mitigation. The point to which too little attention had been paid was how would this Bill bring about that result? Considerable time had been taken up in pointing out the many evils drink brought upon the people; but having heard quotations from medical men of eminence not only in their profession but politically, they were driven to the conclusion that in this case, as in others, doctors differed. Sir Frederick Treves had said—

> "The use of alcohol is absolutely inconsistent with surgeon's work or with any work demanding quick and alert judgment."

That seemed to him to be a proposition too extreme to receive acceptance from ordinary, reasonable men—and when they heard it stated that alcohol was a poison, he wondered if hon. Members were aware that the Minority Report of the Royal Commission stated—

> "We must recognise the fact that most people still regard alcohol as an ordinary article of diet, which is only harmful if taken in excess."

It was idle to say that alcohol was a poison and nothing else, and that the use of it was inconsistent with any work demanding acute and alert judgment.

Mr. BLACK (Banffshire): Sir Frederick Treves says so.

*Mr. SCOTT DICKSON: I know.

Mr. BLACK: How long ago was the Commission?

*Mr. SCOTT DICKSON: It is true that life is long, no doubt, but alcohol cannot become a poison from being an article of diet in six years.

Mr. BLACK: But opinion changes in six years.

*Mr. SCOTT DICKSON said that a strong argument had been used by the supporters of the Bill that they must trust the people. But that was what the supporters of the Bill would not do. If it were proposed to bring in a Bill to allow the people to say whether they should increase the number of licences or diminish them, the temperance party, as they called themselves, would have nothing to do with it. That was not trusting the people. It was because the temperance party were afraid of trusting the people that they brought in a Bill of this one-sided character.

Mr. HUNTER CRAIG: Who said so?

*Mr. SCOTT DICKSON: Will they take a Bill of that kind?

Mr. WHITTAKER (Yorkshire, W.R., Spen Valley): Will you give us a Bill on that footing?

*Mr. SCOTT DICKSON: Will hon. Members opposite try their hands at a temperance Bill of that kind?

Mr. WHITTAKER: Will you give us one?

*Mr. SCOTT DICKSON said that the present Bill had been brought in by those whose reading on the subject stopped at a more ancient date than 1899. It stopped at 1897, because the promoters said that any offence against the Bill was to be subject to the penalties of the Licensing Acts, 1828–1897, completely forgetting, apparently, that there had been the Report of the Royal Commission in 1899, and an important Licensing Act passed in 1903 for Scotland, which in very many material respects changed the whole situation. Neither the Majority nor the Minority Reports of the Royal Commission was in favour of a Bill of this kind. The Majority Report was against it, and the Minority Report said that they (the minority) were in favour of it if there was compensation, and if there was a period of five or seven years allowed to elapse. The Report which the hon. Member for Spen Valley signed did not believe in this Bill and did not approve of compensation. This Bill did not allow the prescribed time or give compensation, and did not intend to. He therefore claimed the support of the hon. Member for the Spen Valley as one who should vote with him against this Bill. Would the House remember that under the Act of 1903 a very large representative element was introduced into the Licensing Court, which made a most material change? What was proposed now was to substitute a chance majority, a majority even of one, instead of the magisterial discretion. That would be a retrograde step. It was the kind of legislation to which the hon. Member for Camborne took exception years ago.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON said he had always, ever since he had been in the House, supported every moderate temperance reform that had been brought in.

*MR. SCOTT DICKSON asked what did the Bill propose? It proposed that, taking a town with ten or twenty wards, there might be alternative wards where drink shops were prohibited, and alternative wards where there might be as many shops as the magistrates cared to allow. Was that calculated to increase temperance? [OPPOSITION cries of "Yes."] The same would apply to country parishes, but, with regard to that, it was suggested that all the places should take their holidays on one day under the Act. But then the Act said that the Licensing Court might pass a by-law for closing licensed premises wholly or partly on New Year's Day, or on such other days, not being more than four in any one year, as the Licensing Court might deem fit and expedient for special reasons. Just fancy the feelings of the people in Paisley when the Magistrates proposed to close all the public-houses in that town because it was a Glasgow Spring Holiday. That, surely, would not be local option.

MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): It would be a special reason.

*MR. SCOTT DICKSON: What about Paisley when their holiday came? They would have exhausted their power of closing, and would have to go up to Glasgow. When they had such a measure as was passed two years ago, surely it was a little too much to say that Parliament was to be asked to upset the whole of the discretionary power then conferred and to place the matter absolutely in the control of the chance majorities. Surely in a matter of this kind it was much more like trusting the people to say, "We shall allow you, in the management of your affairs, to regulate this matter, and if you do not regulate it we will turn you out at the next election." He confessed that to his mind there had been no argument adduced to show that this Bill, if passed, would mitigate the evils of drunkenness. That was the point of the question. Nobody doubted there were great evils from drink, but many of them doubted that a Bill of this kind would bring about the result which its supporters said it would. On the contrary, he thought this panacea would tend to create evils worse than those which existed at present, and because of that he would vote against the Bill.

*MR. WHITTAKER said the Lord-Advocate had claimed his vote against the Bill on the ground that the Minority

Report of the Royal Commission recommended popular control at the end of five years grace, but the right hon. Gentleman in his reference to the Minority Report had omitted to notice the fact that there was a reservation embodied in a Memorandum, which five of them signed, to the effect that people were entitled to have the right at once to prohibit the issue of licences in any district where they were considered unnecessary. That was the broad principle of this Bill. Personally he was in favour of a large majority, not because he did not think a bare majority would not be perfectly right and just, but because he thought it desirable to have a distinct majority behind the law in order to have it more efficiently enforced.

As to the actual working of prohibition, the Commission did not hear a single witness from any foreign country or any colony. They had evidence as to the advisability of applying prohibition here but no evidence of its working abroad or in the Colonies. With reference to the pictures which had been drawn of the dire results of having prohibition in one area and not in an adjoining one, he, perhaps, might be allowed to point out that this condition practically obtained at present in parts of London and elsewhere, where, as a condition on which the land was held, public-houses were not allowed. These were virtually prohibited areas, and it was all to their advantage, as the people flocked to them the more readily because the houses were better and the conditions of life were more desirable. The right hon. Gentleman had twitted them with the fact that they would not trust the people with the power to increase the number of licences. Would the right hon. Gentleman's objection to this Bill be removed if such were not the case? Would the right hon. Gentleman give them such a Bill? As to the allegations of perjury and immorality in the prohibition States of America, unfortunately there was a great deal of corruption in the administration of almost all laws in the United States, but it would be strange news indeed to learn that in Chicago and New York corruption and immorality were absent and that in the prohibition States they abounded. Corruption in its worst form was to be found in Chicago and New York, where they had never had prohibition.

In order to show how the prohibition law was evaded he was taken, when in the United States, to the towns of Lewistown and Auburn, where he had been told liquor was being sold freely. He was taken by the sheriff of the adjoining county to the store of a large tradesman, a friend of the sheriff, and that gentleman undertook to show him where drink could be obtained. After they had been out for an hour and had been unable to get a drop of liquor they went to lunch, and on their return they met a gentleman—just the sort of person who would be found on a racecourse—and after considerable negotiation that gentleman was induced to show him where liquor could be obtained. He was taken then to a mean sort of refreshment place in the French portion of the town, in which there was not five shillings worth of stock, where he had to pass through twelve doors, most of which had to be closed before the next could be opened, till at length he reached a little dark scullery, in which was a jar of whisky, from which a small quantity was supplied in a flask. When he got out and inquired what all the manœuvring meant, he was informed that there was an electric bell in the front shop, that when any suspicious person approached they sprang the bell, and that thereupon the man in the scullery emptied the jar of whisky down the sink. The doors took the police so long to get through that when they reached the scullery there was no whisky on the premises. That was the way the prohibition law was violated, and he submitted that it was fairly effective prohibition. There were a good many laws in this country which were evaded much more barefacedly. He admitted that in the town of Portland, Maine, liquor was sold when he was there because it was done with the connivance of the sheriff himself. He asked the sheriff one day why he did not make them shut up, and the reply was, "Oh, I think the sale ought to be allowed under control and that they ought to pay for being allowed to sell, so I bring them up every month or two, and have them fined one hundred dollars for selling liquor, and then let them go on again." But in the case of Portland, the sheriff's action had been of so outrageous a character that a law was passed that so frightened him that he was now shutting up the houses in Portland where liquor was sold.

This was a Local Veto Bill. In the State of Maine prohibition was carried by a vote of the whole State, and it might be that some place might not be in favour of prohibition, and that though they might be able to enforce prohibition over a wide area like Maine, in one particular place they might not be able to do so. That was why several of the American States had abandoned State prohibition, and had adopted local veto instead where the localities were in favour of the principle. This was the proposal contained in the present measure. There was no attempt made in it to interfere with individual liberty; all it was proposed to do was to interfere with the public sale of liquor. What they said was that if a man wanted liquor then he would have to make his own arrangements to get it, but if the people of a district believed that a public-house in their midst would create a great evil, then they should have the right and power to shut it up. Mr. Bass, when a Member of this House, passed a Bill through which gave power to any one man in a street to stop a barrel organ or a German band from playing if it was a nuisance to him. Mr. Bass thought it was just and right for one man in a street to have that power. All they asked now was that by a substantial majority the people should be allowed to protect themselves from a great evil, an evil which extended, not for ten minutes, but from Monday morning to Saturday night.

SIR ROBERT REID said he did not approach this matter as a total abstainer, but as a citizen who was anxious for the healthy development of the life of his own countrymen. The evil of intemperance was not disputed by anyone. That evil was in some cases more formidable in Scotland than in England by reason of the character of the liquor which was mostly con-consumed there. The liquor was thoroughly bad. It was not good whisky, it was often very bad, very raw, and very immature, and it did incalculable harm to the people who consumed it in large quantities. He himself believed that Scotland was capable of leading the thought of mankind throughout the world, and would do so were it not for this cursed drink traffic, which people were only too anxious to control by proper laws, but were not allowed by Parliament to do. The Lord-Advocate deprecated looking at this question from a Party point of view, but he did not think the right hon. Gentleman was himself wholly free from Party bias in the manner in which he handled the subject. On behalf of the Government the Lord-Advocate had not the smallest suggestion of any sort or kind to make for the purpose of meeting this terrible evil. That showed that the Government was not fit for its place in dealing with a matter of this kind. He maintained that no Government was fit for its place that was not prepared to do a great deal more than had ever yet been done in regard to the question of intemperance in Scotland.

*Mr. SCOTT DICKSON: We did in 1903 by the registration of clubs more in the direction of temperance than has been done for the last twenty years.

Sir ROBERT REID said he was speaking rather of what the Government were prepared to do. For the Lord-Advocate to regard the registration of clubs as a temperance reform of a very important character was a mistake and delusion. There never had been the pretence of fixity of tenure in regard to public-houses in Scotland, and people had frequently been dispossessed of their public-houses on the ground that they were not required in the public interest. The hon. Member for Renfrew proposed to give compensation in the case of many of these public-houses which were discontinued in the public interest. He did not think the hon. Member would find much Scottish opinion in support of such a proposal. Local option limited to small areas was quite a different thing from prohibition over large areas, such as prevailed in the United States. He did not doubt that in a great many parts of Scotland the power of local veto would not be exercised, but of this he was certain, that the mere fact that they had that power would have the effect of revolutionising the whole system of licensing in Scotland. The whole objection to the Bill seemed to be that it contained no proposal for compensation. Such a proposal was scouted by all Parties in Scotland. This subject in one form or another had been brought forward four times in the last twenty-five years, and this was the fifth time. In 1880 the principle of this Bill was affirmed by thirty-eight Scottish Members against three. In 1881 the principle was affirmed by thirty-seven Scottish Members against three. In 1883 the principle was affirmed by thirty-six Scottish Members against two. It took sixteen years from the year 1883 onwards to get an opportunity of discussing this vital question again in the House of Commons, and when at last it was brought before the House in 1899, forty Scottish Members voted in favour of the principle of the Bill and fifteen against it. He thought that when the opinion of Scotland was so strongly in favour of this Bill, and had for five and twenty years been endeavouring to give it effect, English Members had no right at all constantly to outvote the Scottish Members and to prevent the opinion of Scotland from taking effect. It was not the result of the opinion of the English people; it was owing to the influence of a great English trade in the House. It was the influence of the liquor trade in the House and in the country, and by the unjust and unfair influence of that trade the voice of Scotland upon a matter deeply affecting her had been overridden. He protested against that as a Scotsman and as a Scottish Member. He appealed to the fairness and good sense of English Members not to allow it to be done any longer. He hoped whatever Government might be returned at the next election, Scotland would determine that they would not be further humbugged in this matter.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend) said he did not believe an Act of this kind would be for the benefit of the people of Scotland. He quite agreed that an Act of local veto was much better than an Act of prohibition. Canada had proceeded by way of a Prohibition Act but she had not become more sober in consequence of that Act. Canada was sober before there was such an Act, and had not improved so far as sobriety was concerned since. The drink bill had gone up, yet it was still the most sober country of the world because the temperance spirit was greater there than in any other country in the world, but public opinion was always turning towards the sign of prohibitory legislation. The *Daily News* said with regard to Canada, where the Scott Act had been in operation for twenty-five years—

> "It is a rare thing to see any wine, malt liquor, or other intoxicant on a dinner table in Canada. A good deal of drinking takes place, but not in the open. In England drinking intoxicants is social orthodoxy; in Canada not to drink intoxicants is social orthodoxy. In England legislation lags behind public opinion on the temperance question. In Canada legislation has got ahead of public opinion on the temperance question. The law in most of the provinces is so stringent that it is generally disregarded not openly, but only with a pretence of disguise."

It was twenty years since he had lived in Canada, but when he lived there he saw the operation of the Scott Act, and the result of its operation was that it was adopted in some places and not in others, so that it was not unusual to find that in one portion of a town prohibition existed and in another it did not. The same thing would occur in Scotland under this Bill under similar circumstances. The effect was that in the country where prohibition was adopted it did not decrease but only increased private drinking, because it was lawful to prohibit the selling of liquor but not its manufacture. So long as it was obtainable by crossing the street, or by going on to the next town, no Bill would tend to increase the temperance spirit in the people. The *Christian Guardian* said—

> "It was easier to secure the Scott Act in the counties than to secure its enforcement and permanence."

In Canada in every one of the twenty-six counties that had adopted the Scott Act the law had been steadily evaded. He was not stating these facts as arguments against the principle of local option but as the experience of countries and people who had found it impossible to make such Acts operative and effective.

It had been admitted in this debate that this was a question largely of sentiment. The Presbyterian articles in the *Westminster Gazette* offered the same evidence. They said—

> "Neither missing the election nor the passing of legislation was the vital consideration.

Experience has taught us a few lessons on the futility of hasty or imperative legislation. Temperance reformers of the most extreme type are nursing their theories of reform and are recognising more clearly the importance of constant education and active moral agencies as essential to effective prohibitory laws."

The English Church newspaper, the *Church Record*, said—

"We should like to impress upon our readers that the Church's work is to teach temperance on the basis of the moral and not the civil law."

He offered those opinions, because they were founded on twenty-five years experience of the working of Prohibition Acts. He would oppose in every case a Bill which left any decision in this matter of temperance to a majority of the people in the parish, the county, or the city for the simple reason that there never had been a case where, a power of this sort having been granted by Parliament, it had been possible to get more than 50 per cent. of the people to vote on the question.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 109; Noes, 142. (Division List No. 151).

AYES.

Ainsworth, John Stirling
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt.Hn.HerbertHenry
Atherley-Jones, L.
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Benn, John Williams
Black, Alexander William
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bright, Allan Heywood
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Cawley, Frederick
Cheetham, John Frederick
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Delany, William
Dobbie, Joseph
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Ellice,Capt EC(S.Andr'wsBghs
Evans,SirFrancisH.(Maidstone
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Findlay,Alexander(Lanark,N.E
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.HerbertJohn
Grant, Corrie
Griffith, Ellis J.
Haldane, Rt. Hon.Richard B.
Harcourt, Lewis
Hardie,J.Keir(Merthyr Tydvil)
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Joicey, Sir James
Jones,David Brynmor(Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
Markham, Arthur Basil
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley,Rt.Hon.John(Montrose
Moss, Samuel
Moulton, John Fletcher
Newnes, Sir George
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parrott, William
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Philipps, John Wynford
Pirie, Duncan V.
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan,E.)
Thomas,DavidAlfred(Merthyr)
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, John Cathcart(Orkney)
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York E.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Hunter Craig and Mr. Crombie.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. SirAlex.F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt. Hn. Sir H
Austin, Sir John

Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bathurst, Hn. Allen Benjamin
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M
Bigwood, James
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H F (Middlesex)
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brymer, William Ernest
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A (Glasgow
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Chamberlayne, T. (S'thampton
Chapman, Edward
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Colomb, Rt. Hon. Sir John C. R
Craig, Charles C. (Antrim, S.)
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Doogan, P. C
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. Hart
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R B (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs.)
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Howard, J. Midd., (Tottenham
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutton, John (Yorks., N.R.)
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Keswick, William
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monm'th
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Hn. H. L. W (Mile End)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. NR.
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Malcolm, Ian
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Milvain, Thomas
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, David J (Walthamstow
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Nicholson, William Graham
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pym, C. Guy
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Richards, Henry C. (Finsbury, E.
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Hon. W. F. D (Strand)
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset)
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G (Oxf'd Univ
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C E H (Sheffield
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E (Taunton
Whiteley, H. (Ashton-und Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H (Yorks
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R (Bath)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Lewis M'Iver and Sir Gilbert Parker.

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Second Reading put off for six months.

NEW BILL.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT (1901) AMENDMENT.

Bill to amend The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, in respect of Laundries, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Cameron Corbett, Sir Hugh Shaw-Stewart, Mr. Arthur Henderson, and Mr. Trevelyan.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT (1901) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, in respect of Laundries," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 204.]

Whereupon Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 3.

Adjourned at a quarter before Six o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 8th May, 1905.

SAT FIRST.

The Lord Chelmsford sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with:—Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Liverpool, etc.) [H.L.].

Also the Certificate that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with:—Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water Company (Petition for Bill).

And also the Certificates that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Acton Sewage; Birmingham Corporation; Brentwood Gas; Great Berkhampstead Gas; Ilfracombe Harbour and Improvement; London Gas; Otley Improvement; Great Northern Railway; Nottingham and Retford Railway; Seaham Gas; Croydon Gas; Dublin Corporation (Superannuation); Hitchin and District Gas.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Lautour's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. Witnesses ordered to attend on the Second Reading of the Bill, two to produce documents.

Matlock Bath Improvement Bill [H.L.]. Witnesses ordered to attend the Select Committee.

Earl of Stamford's Cheshire Estate. Petition for a Private Bill, together with a copy of the proposed Bill annexed thereto; read, and referred to two English Judges.

Corbett Estate Bill [H.L.]. Judges' Report received; Bill presented, and read 1^a.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

Ocean Accident and Guarantee Corporation Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn.

Clay Cross Railway (Abandonment) Bill. Read 2^a, and committed.

Great Central Railway Bill [H.L.]; Dearne Valley Railway Bill [H.L.]; Sheffield University Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Southampton and Winchester Great Western Junction Railway (Abandonment) Bill. Read 3^a, and passed.

Brompton, Chatham, Gillingham, and Rochester Water Bill. Read 3^a, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

Whitechapel and Bow Railway Bill; Great Western Railway (New Railways) Bill; Aylesbury Gas Bill; Ealing Corporation Bill; South Oxfordshire Water and Gas Bill; Great Western Railway (Additional Powers) Bill; Aberdare Urban District Council Bill; Colne Corporation Bill; Stockport Corporation Bill; Halifax Corporation Bill; Andover Lighting and Power Bill; Bristol Corporation Bill; Croydon Corporation Bill; Swansea Corporation Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; and referred to the Examiners.

Cordoba and Rosario Railway Bill [H.L.]; Entre Rios Railways Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to.

Worcestershire County Council Bridges Bill. Examiner's Certificate of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Tuesday, the 16th instant.

Wellingborough and District Tramroads and Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]. The order made on the 31st of March last appointing certain Lords the Select Committee to consider the Bill, discharged.

Bridgwater Canals Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the Promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. The Orders made on the 3rd and 31st of

March last, discharged. Ordered, That the Bill be not further proceeded with.

Sunderland and South Shields Water Bill. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the Promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be not further proceeded with.

Abertillery Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the Promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. The Orders of the 21st of February and the 31st of March last, discharged. Ordered, That the Bill be not further proceeded with.

Barrymore Estate Bill [H.L.]; Leven's Patent Bill [H.L.]. Committed.

Hythe Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Whitby Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Mansfield Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Hastings Tramways Bill [H.L.]; London Squares and Enclosures (Preservation) Bill [H.L.]; Nottingham Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Sandgate Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Blackpool Improvement Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Denman be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Shute (*V. Barrington*); read, and agreed to.

Bangor (County Down) Water and Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Matlock Bath Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]; Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Formby Township Bill [H.L.]; Humber Conservancy Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Chelmsford be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Earl of Westmeath; read, and agreed to.

Harbour, etc., Bills. Report of the Board of Trade on the Humber Conservancy Bill [H.L.]. Ordered to be laid before the House. (The Lord Privy Seal (*M. Salisbury*).

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS (RECESS).

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House, That the following Papers, having been commanded to be presented to this House by His Majesty, had been so presented on the following dates by delivery to the Clerk of the Parliaments, pursuant to Standing Order No. CXI., viz.:—

Charity Commission. Fifty second Report of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales. (April 17.)

Egypt, No. 1 (1905) — Reports by His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General on the finances, administration, and condition of Egypt and the Soudan in 1904. (April 17.)

Board of Education:—

I. Regulations for secondary schools from 1st August, 1905, to 31st July, 1906. (April 17.)

II. Special reports on educational subjects. Volume 15.—School training for the home duties of women. Part I. The teaching of "domestic science" in the United States of America. (April 27.)

Free and United Free Churches (Scotland):—

I. Royal Commission on Churches.
Vol. I.—Reports.
Vol. II. Minutes of evidence and appendices. (April 18.)

II. Departmental Commission. Interim Report to the Secretary for Scotland by Sir John Cheyne, K.C. (May 3.)

Education (Scotland). Report and Papers relating to the training of teachers for the year 1903–1904. (April 18.)

Labour Statistics (Board of Trade (Labour Department). Tenth Abstract of Labour Statistics of the United Kingdom, 1902–1904. (April 18.)

Transvaal:—

I. Further correspondence relating to labour in the Transvaal mine (in continuation of [Cd. 2183]). (April 18.)

II. Papers relating to Constitutional changes in the Transvaal. (April 27.)

III. Despatch transmitting Letters Patent and Order in Council providing for Constitutional changes in the Transvaal. (April 27.)

Education (Ireland) 1904. Annual Report of the Commissioners of Education in Ireland, for the year 1904. (April 27.)

Agrarian Offences (Provinces) (Ireland). Return for the year ended December 31st, 1904. (April 27.)

Lunacy (Scotland). Forty-seventh Annual Report of the General Board of Commissioners in Lunacy for Scotland. (April 27.)

Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887. Return of the number of Eviction Notices filed during the Quarter ended December 31st, 1904. (April 27.)

Trade. Annual Statement of the Trade of the United Kingdom with Foreign Countries and British Possessions, 1904, compared with the four preceding years. Vol. I. (Summaries, Abstract, and detailed Tables of Imports and Exports.) (April 27.)

Factory and Workshop (Laundries). List of religious and charitable institutions in which laundries are carried on. (April 27.)

Explosives (Explosion at Messrs. Eley Brothers' Factory, Edmonton, Middlesex. Report to the right hon. the Secretary of State for the Home Department by Captain J. H. Thomson, His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Explosives, on the circumstances attending an explosion of collodion cotton which occurred at the factory of Messrs. Eley Brothers, Limited, at Edmonton, Middlesex, on March 7th, 1905. (April 27.)

TREATY SERIES.

No. 9 (1905). Convention between the United Kingdom and France respecting commercial relations between France and India; signed at London, February 19th, 1903. (Ratifications exchanged at London, March 27th, 1905.)

No. 10 (1905). Convention between the United Kingdom and France respecting commercial relations between France and the British Protectorates of East Africa, Central Africa, and Uganda; signed at London, 23rd February, 1903. (Ratifications exchanged at London, 27th March, 1905.)

No. 11 (1905). Convention between the United Kingdom and France respecting commercial relations between France and the Seychelles Islands; signed at London, 16th April, 1902. (Ratifications exchanged at London, 27th March, 1905.)

No. 12 (1905). Convention between the United Kingdom and France respecting commercial relations between France and Ceylon; signed at London, 19th February, 1903. (Ratifications exchanged at London, 27th March, 1905.)

No. 13 (1905). Convention between the United Kingdom and Japan respecting commercial relations between Japan and India; signed at Tokio, 29th August, 1904. (Ratifications exchanged at Tokio, 15th March, 1905.) (April 27.)

TRADE REPORTS.—I. (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 3342. Germany (Chemnitz and Saxony).

No. 3343. Austria-Hungary (Finances and General Economic Conditions of Austria-Hungary).

No. 3344. China (Canton).

No. 3345. Chile (Coquimbo).

No. 3346. France (Calais).

No. 3347. Argentine Republic (Buenos Ayres).

No. 3348. United States (Texas).

No. 3349. United States (Chicago).

No. 3350. Denmark (Iceland). (April 27.)

No. 3351. Russia (Poland and Lithuania).

No. 3352. Spain (Bilbao). (April 28.)

No. 3353. United States (New York). (April 29.)

No. 3354. China (Newchwang).

No. 3355. Peru (Iquitos). (May 2.)

No. 3356. Portugal (Azores).

No. 3357. Turkey (Constantinople).

No. 3358. Germany (Pomerania). May 3.)

No. 3359. Turkey (Trebizond Vilayet).

No. 3360. Persia (Arabistan). (May 4.)

No. 3361. Greece (Thessaly).

No. 3362. Argentine Republic (Rosario). (May 5.)

No. 3363. Turkey (Aleppo and Andana).

No. 3364. China (Wuhu). (May 6.)

II. (MISCELLANEOUS SERIES).

No. 633. Italy (Mineral Wealth of the Provinces of Siena and Grosseto). May 2.)

Underfed Children at Public Elementary Schools. Circulars issued in April, 1905, by the Local Government Board and the Board of Education as to the cases of children attending public elementary schools who are without adequate nourishment. (April 29.)

Wellington College. Report of the Governors for the year ended 31st December, 1904; with accounts. (May 1.)

Mines and Quarries. Reports of His Majesty's Inspectors of Mines and Quarries for the year 1904. (May 1.)

Reformatory and Industrial Schools (Great Britain). Forty-eighth Report, for the year 1904, of the Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools. Part I. List of Schools and detailed Reports. (May 1.)

Navy (Gunnery). Result of Gunlayers Competition in His Majesty's Fleet, 1904. (May 3.)

Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland). Fourth Annual General Report of the Department, 1903–1904. (May 3.)

Turkey, No. 2 (1905). Further correspondence respecting the Affairs of South Eastern Europe (in continuation of "Turkey No. 4, (1904)"). (May 4.)

Newfoundland. Report on the Foreign Trade and Commerce of Newfoundland. (May 4.)

Transvaal and Orange River Colony. Further correspondence relating to Affairs in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony (in continuation of [Cd. 2104]). (May 4.)

Post Office. Agreement between the Post Office of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office Department of the United States of America for the direct exchange of parcels by parcel post, dated 3rd February, 1905. (May 5.)

West Indies. Despatch to the Governors of the West Indian Colonies respecting the West Indian Mail Contract. (May 6.)

Boiler Explosions. Report to the Secretary of the Board of Trade upon the working of the Boiler Explosions Acts, 1882 and 1890; with appendices (in continuation [Cd. 1764.]). (May 6.)

Local Government Board (Scotland). Tenth Annual Report of the Local Government Board for Scotland, 1904. (May 6.)

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND).

Return of evictions in Ireland for the quarter ended 31st March, 1905. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

LUNACY.

Report to the Lord Chancellor of the number of visits made, the number of patients seen, and the number of miles travelled by the visitors of lunatics pursuant to the Lunacy Act, 1890, between 1st October, 1904, and 31st March, 1905.

BOARD OF EDUCATION (AMENDING ORDER No. 1).

Order amending Final Order No. 391.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1889.

Annual Report on the state of the finances of the University of Glasgow under the provisions of Section 30 of the Universities (Scotland) Act, 1889, for the year 1903–1904.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 TO 1903.

Hull (Channel Islands Animals) Landing Place Order of 1905.

POST OFFICE.

Statutory Rules and Orders, 1904—

No. 1746. The Inland Post Amendment (No. 1) Warrant.

Statutory Rules and Orders, 1905—

No. 56. The Foreign and Colonial Post Amendment (No. 9) Warrant.

No. 446. The Postal Order (Inland) Amendment (No. 2) Regulations.

No. 410. The Foreign and Colonial Post Amendment (No. 10) Warrant.

CERTIFIED INEBRIATE REFORMATORIES (REGULATIONS FOR MANAGEMENT).

Regulations made with the approval of the Secretary of State for the Home Department for the management and discipline of the certified inebriates reformatory at Cattal, near York.

PUBLIC RECORDS (FINES AND RECOVERIES).

Schedule containing a list and particulars of classes of documents connected with the alienation of land by means of fines and recoveries which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office.

IRISH LAND ACT, 1903.

Treasury rules and regulations, dated 14th April, 1905, under the Irish Land Act, 1903.

METROPOLITAN POLICE (ACCOUNTS).

Accounts showing the sums received and expended for the purposes of the Metropolitan Police and Police Pension Funds between the 1st April, 1904, and the 31st March, 1905.

PHARMACY (IRELAND) ACTS, 1875 TO 1890.

Order in Council, dated 22nd April, 1905, approving of regulations made by the Pharmaceutical Society.

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS, 1853 TO 1891 (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).

Licence granted by His Majesty to Harry Tate, under the provisions of the Penal Servitude Acts, 1853 to 1901, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864.

POLLING DISTRICTS (BOROUGH OF HUDDERSFIELD).

Order made by the Council of the borough of Huddersfield re-dividing the Lockwood Ward of the borough into polling districts.

LIGHTHOUSES, ETC. (LOCAL INSPECTIONS).

Reports to the Board of Trade by the Trinity House of Deptford Strond, the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses, and the Commissioners of Irish Lights, of their inspection of local lighthouses, buoys, and beacons (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 176, of Session 1904).

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

UNION OF BENEFICES (METROPOLIS) ACT, 1860.

Scheme for effecting an union of the Benefices of St. Paul's, Covent Garden, and of St. Michael's, Burleigh Street, in the city of Westminster, and for effecting certain other measures incidental to or arising out of such union. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. (No. 58.)

THAMES CONSERVANCY.

General Report of the proceedings of the Conservators of the river Thames during the year ended 31st December, 1904, with a statement of the accounts of the Conservators for that year: Delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

HARBOUR, ETC., BILLS.

Return respecting, laid before the House (pursuant to Order of this day) and to be printed. (No. 59.)

NEW BILLS.

PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1) BILL [H.L.] (No. 60).

A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861, relating to Craster, Tralee, and Tenit; And

PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL [H.L.] (No. 61).

A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861, relating to Melfort and Portencross:

Were presented by the Lord Privy Seal (*M. Salisbury*); read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners.

NAVAL AND MILITARY MEDALS BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to regulate and restrict the wearing of naval and military medals and decorations. Was presented by the Viscount Hutchinson (*E. Donoughmore*); read 1ª; and to be printed. (No 62.)

METROPOLITAN POLICE PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

Read 2ª (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow.

House adjourned at half-past Four o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 8*th May*, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE AND THE ABSENCE OF THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. SPEAKER, owing to continued indisposition, and of the unavoidable absence of the CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS, owing to indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JEFFREYS, the Deputy-Chairman, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—London County Council (Money) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time to-morrow.

PRIVATE BILLS (PETITION FOR ADDITIONAL PROVISION) (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Reports from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for additional

Provision in the following Bills, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.:—London County Council (General Powers) Bill; London County Council (Tramways) Bill; Wigan Corporation Bill

Ordered, That the Reports be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

Heckmondwike Improvement Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Marylebone Chapels Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Company Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Bill. As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

Edgware and Hampstead Railway Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

West Cumberland Electric Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords]. Considered; to be read the third time.

Grangemouth Waterworks and Burgh Extension Order Confirmation Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill. Order for Second Reading upon Thursday, May 1 th, read, and discharged; Bill withdrawn

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP H).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER informed the House, That the Committee on Group H of Private Bills not being appointed to meet until Thursday next, the parties promoting the Skegness Water Bill, which was set down for consideration on the first day of the meeting of the Committee, had appeared before him and proved that the evidence of Dr. Samuel Rideal, 28, Victoria Street, Westminster, and John Clough Thresh, Chelmsford, was essential to their case, and that their attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House.

Ordered, That Samuel Rideal and John Clough Thresh do attend the Committee on Group H of Private Bills on Thursday next, at Twelve of the clock.

POLICE AND SANITARY COMMITTEE.

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER informed the House, That the Police and Sanitary Committee being adjourned until to-morrow, the parties opposing the Liverpool Corporation Bill, which was set down for to-morrow, had appeared before him and proved that the evidence of Dr. William Collingridge, Medical Officer of Health for the City of London, Guildhall, E.C., was essential to their case, and that his attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House.

Ordered, That Dr. William Collingridge do attend the Police and Sanitary Committee To-morrow, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Fearn, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Lesmahagow, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

FRANCHISE AND REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.

Two Petitions from West Bristol, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

JUVENILE SMOKING BILL.

Petition from Leith, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Kirriemuir, against; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Broughty Ferry; Cockburnspath; Coldstream; Dundee; Eastwood; Edinburgh; Glasgow (two); Govan; Hillhead and Kelvinside; Kelso Abbey; Kiloyth (two); Kinning Park; Kirkcaldy; Larbert; Leith; Lesmahagow; Maryhill; Paisley; Portobello; Reston; and Scour; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petition from Margate, against; to lie upon the Table.

MILK DEPOTS (LONDON) BILL.

Petition from Lewisham, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petition from North Manchester, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

LOCAL TAXATION (GRANTS IN AID).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 10th April; *Mr. Black*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 153.]

EVICTIONS (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Return of the number of Evictions in Ireland for the quarter ended 31st March, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 TO 1903.

Copy presented, of the Hull (Channel Islands Animals) Landing Place Order of 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVAL EXPENDITURE (GREAT BRITAIN AND FOREIGN COUNTRIES).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 4th May; *Sir Edgar Vincent*]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Union of Benefices Act (Saint Paul, Covent Garden, with Saint Michael, Burleigh Street). Copy of Scheme under The Union of Benefices Act, 1860, for effecting an Union of the Benefices of Saint Paul, Covent Garden, with Saint Michael, Burleigh Street [by Act].

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT.

Address for "Return of all sentences of Corporal Punishment inflicted under 26 and 27 Vic., c. 44, upon persons convicted of offences under Section 43 of The Larceny Act, 1861, and Section 21 of The Offences Against the Person Act, 1861, in England and Wales, from the 31st day of December, 1903, to the 31st day of December 1904, (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 288, of Session 1904)."—(*Mr. Lloyd Morgan.*)

SUGAR AND SUGARED GOODS (IMPORT DUTIES) (FOREIGN COUNTRIES).

Return ordered, "showing the amount of the Import Duties imposed on Sugar and on confectionery, jams, biscuits, cakes, and other sugared goods in Germany, Austria, Hungary, Belgium, Holland, France, and Switzerland; and also a Return of the drawbacks granted on exports in these countries on all these commodities."—(*Mr. Lough.*)

SMALLPOX.

Return ordered, "showing as regards each Port or other Sanitary District in England and Wales (exclusive of any district wholly or partly in London), in respect of which during the year ended the 25th day of March, 1905, cases of Smallpox have been reported to the Local Government Board; the number of such cases; and also, where the number reported has exceeded 100, the estimated amount of the expenditure incurred by the Sanitary Authority in consequence of the occurrence of such cases."—(*Sir John Tuke.*)

EAST INDIA (FINANCIAL STATEMENT).

Address for "Copy of the Indian Financial Statement for 1905–6 and of the Proceedings of the Legislative Council of the Governor-General thereon."—(*Sir Henry Fowler.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Irish Estates Commissioners—Legal Advice by Law Officers of the Crown.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): To ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether the Law Officers of the Crown in Ireland have given any legal advice to the Estates Commissioners in regard to the administration of the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) No, Sir. The Law Officers of the Crown in Ireland give their legal advice to the Lord-Lieutenant and Chief Secretary on all such questions as may be referred to them, but they do not advise and have not advised the Estates Commissioners.

Navy—Training of Engineer Officers—Age Regulations.

Sir GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty at what age the special training of officers of the Navy, who are to form the engineers branch of the profession, will commence.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The hon. Member will find the Answer to his Question at page 5 of the Memorandum presented to Parliament on December 16th, 1902, in which it was stated that the age at which the careers of the young officers will begin to diverge will be from nineteen to twenty years. The Admiralty do not propose to anticipate the more detailed rules which will have to be laid down later in order to give effect to the scheme adopted in 1902.

New Construction in British and Foreign Navies.

Mr. PARTINGTON (Derbyshire, High Peak): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he can give the amount of tonnage and its cost added by new construction to the British, French, German, United States of America, and Russian navies for the five years ending 31st March, 1905.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The figures, which do not include torpedo boats and submarines, are as follows:—

	Tons.	Cost.
		£
Great Britain	601,755	46,712,123
France - -	178,322	17,589,215
Germany -	198,561	18,830,704
United States	154,184	14,663,817
Russia - -	267,586	23,836,892

Irish Board of Agriculture—Local Bodies and Staff Grievances.

Mr. O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the names of the local public bodies who have made representations to the Department of Agriculture in connection with the alleged inequality in the treatment of its staff; and what steps, if any, the Department proposes to take to satisfy these bodies of the justice or otherwise of their complaints.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The public bodies which have notified to the Department their adoption of a resolution passed, on the motion of the hon. Member for the Ossory Division, by the King's County Council, are as follows:—

Dublin County Council.
Cavan County Council.
Cork Borough County Council.
Kerry County Council.
New Ross Urban Council.
Middleton Urban Council.
Newry Urban Council.

The Department do not propose to discuss questions as to the organisation of their office staff with local bodies which have no functions in the matter.

Uncertified Deaths in Scotland and Ireland.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Lord-Advocate if he will state the number of uncertified deaths in Scotland and Ireland respectively for each year since 1900.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) The number of deaths from uncertified causes in Scotland during 1900 were 2,757; during 1901 were 2,392; during 1902 were 2,180. Figures for 1903–4 are not yet available. For information as to the Irish figures the hon. Member will probably apply to the Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant.

Fines for Illegal Trawling.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Lord-Advocate if he will state the number of foreign and British trawlers respectively whose masters have been fined for illegal trawling during the present year, the aggregate amount of the fines, and the account into which such fines have been paid.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) The masters of ten foreign and five British trawlers have been fined for illegal trawling during the present year, the aggregate amount of fines is represented by £1,160, and the fines paid have been credited to the account for "Law Charges and Courts of Law, Scotland," under Sub-head U, "Appropriations-in-Aid, Cash Fines, and Forfeitures."

Elections of Justices of the Peace to the Licensing Court in Scotland.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): To ask the Lord-Advocate whether justices of the peace who are licence-holders are entitled to vote for the representatives of the justices on the Licensing Court in Scotland, notwithstanding the fact that they cannot themselves sit on such Court.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) In my opinion they are.

Poor Law Medical Relief—Recommendations of Departmental Committee.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs): To ask the Lord-Advocate whether he proposes to take any further action upon the Report of the Departmental Committee on Poor Law Medical Relief.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) A Bill is in course of preparation which, as at present proposed, will embody certain of the recommendations of the Departmental Committee on Poor Law Medical Relief.

Learners in Dundee Telegraph Department.

MR. J. F. HOPE (Sheffield, Brightside): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that there are fourteen fully qualified learners in the Dundee Telegraph Department with service extending to three years, and that under present conditions there is no prospect of appointment for a considerable period; and whether, in view of the fact that these youths were attracted into the telegraph department by the prospect of permanent employment, he will state what steps he intends taking to provide appointments for learners who have proved themselves efficient.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) There are nine male and five female learners at Dundee, the greatest length of service in the case of the males being two years five months and in the case of the females two years nine months, and of these only four males and three females are fully qualified. The position, therefore, is not so serious as represented by the hon. Member. I regret that owing to the dearth of vacancies it has not been possible as yet to provide appointments for these officers, but I have recently arranged for an advance in the pay of those having more than two years service, and the whole matter is still receiving careful attention.

West Indian Mail Contract.

Mr. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby): To ask the Postmaster-General if he will say at what date he received the tender from Messrs. Elder, Dempster for the West Indian mails; had the terms of the Royal Mail then been made public; and in asking the Royal Mail again to tender were they informed that another tender by Messrs. Elder and Co. was already in his hands.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) A full statement of the course followed in this matter has been embodied in a despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Governors of the colonies concerned. This despatch has been laid on the Table of the House, and will be in the hands of hon. Members very shortly, and will give the information wished for by the hon. Member in a fuller and more convenient form than can be done by Question and Answer.

Appeal of Telegraphist Fox, of Portadown.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will state the date upon which he received the appeal of a telegraphist, named Fox, at Portadown, against the infliction of a punishment, and the date upon which the officer was compelled to perform the punishment; and whether it is the rule in the Postal Department that an officer being punished for a breach of regulations, and appealing to the Postmaster-General for a reconsideration, should be compelled by the local officials to perform the punishment before the Postmaster-General's decision is received.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The appeal has not yet been submitted to me. I am informed that certain inquiries were necessary before the case could be presented to me in a complete form for my decision. Mr. Fox performed two hours extra duty without pay, the punishment in question, on February 28th, the day on which he appealed. He raised no objection to the carrying out of the punishment before his appeal was considered; and it is evident that if my decision should be in his favour the punishment can be cancelled by the deletion of the record and payment for the extra duty at overtime rate.

Remuneration of Irish and Scotch Law Officers of the Crown.

Mr. WHITLEY (Halifax): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury what payments were made in salaries and fees to the Irish and Scotch Law Officers during the financial year ending March 31st, 1905.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The following were the salaries and fees paid for the year 1904–5 to the Scottish and Irish Law Officers:—

Scotland.

	Lord-Advocate.	Solicitor-Genera
	£	£
Salary .	5,000	2,000
Fees .	None	None

Ireland.

	Attorney-Genera.			Solicitor-General		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Salary .	5,000	0	0	2,000	0	0
Fees .	184	16	0	869	8	0

Particulars of Fees of Law Officers of the Crown.

MR. WHITLEY: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he can specify the services for which the sums of £5,993 14s. 4d. and £3,748 17s. 3d were paid to Mr. Attorney-General and Mr. Solicitor-General respectively where the individual payments amounted to more than £100.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The scale of the fees referred to is settled pursuant to the provisions of paragraph 8 of Treasury Minute of July 5th, 1895 (Parliamentary Paper, 429, of 1895, Law Officers' Salaries, etc.), which lays down that for contentious business the Law Officers shall receive fees according to the ordinary professional scales, but that in cases of exceptional importance or difficulty an increased fee on the brief may be allowed as the Chancellor of the Exchequer shall approve. During the year 1904–5 special sanction was obtained on four occasions for payments to a Law Officer, two of which were Foreign Office business.

Remuneration of Law Officers of the Crown.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he can state the amount paid in salaries to the Law Officers of the Crown for each financial year since 1895, separating the salaries and fees of the Attorney-General and Solicitor-General respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) Amounts paid (1) to the Attorney-General, (2) to the Solicitor-General in respect of salary and fees:—

1.

	Salary.	Fees.	Total.
	£	£	£
1895–1896 - - - - -	7,000	3,916	10,916
1896–1897 - - - - -	7,000	6,039	13,039
1897–1898 - - - - -	7,000	7,563*	14,563
1898–1899 - - - - -	7,000	10,264*	17,264
1899–1900 - - - - -	7,000	11,804*	18,804
1900–1901 - - - - -	7,000	1,416† 4,502‡	12,918
1901–1902 - - - - -	7,000	5,477	12,477
1902–1903 - - - - -	7,000	4,816	11,816
1903–1904 - - - - -	7,000	12,921§	19,921
1904–1905 - - - - -	7,000	5,994‖	12,994

* Including fees in the Venezuela Boundary Arbitration.

† Sir R. E. Webster (now Lord Alverstone).

‡ Sir R. B. Finlay.

§ Including fees in the Alaska Boundary Arbitration of £4,900 10s. and British Guiana Boundary Arbitration of £2,124.

‖ Including fees in the Venezuela Boundary Arbitration of £1,736 4s. 6d. and Brazil and British Guiana Boundary Arbitration of £714 12s.

2.

	Salary.	Fees.	Total.
	£	£	£
1895–1896	6,000	691	6,691
1896–1897	6,000	3,365	9,365
1897–1898	6,000	4,946*	10,946
1898–1899	6,000	5,844*	11,844
1899–1900	6,000	5,329	11,329
1900–1901	6,000	693† 2,648‡	9,341
1901–1902	6,000	4,355	10,355
1902–1903	6,000	3,701	9,701
1903–1904	6,000	7,069§	13,069
1904–1905	6,000	3,749	9,749

* Including fees in the Venezuela Boundary Arbitration.

† Sir R. B. Finlay.

‡ Right Hon. Sir E. H. Carson.

§ Including fees in the Alaska Boundary Arbitration of £2,633 3s. 6d. paid by the Canadian Government.

Duties and Sittings of the Railway and Canal Commissioners.

Mr. LAMBERT: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury what are the administrative duties connected with the Railway and Canal Commission; and for how many days have the Commissioners sat for the discharge of those duties in each year from 1896 to 1904, inclusive.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The administrative duties referred to are all proceedings in connection with complaints and applications made to the Commissioners under the Railway and Canal Traffic Acts, 1854 to 1904, other than those which take place in open Court. The only time record kept is that of public sittings, as to which I have already furnished the hon. Member with information.

Removal of Wreath from Statue of Earl of Beaconsfield.

Dr. SHIPMAN (Northampton): To ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, if he will explain why there was removed from the statue of the late Earl of Beaconsfield on the anniversary of his death a shield composed of primroses and forget-me-nots bearing a quotation from one of his speeches.

(*Answered by Lord Balcarres.*) This was done because it was felt that references to current controversy were out of place in the decoration of monuments of departed statesmen.

H.M.S. "Orion" at Malta.

Mr. KEARLEY (Devonport): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether it is intended to continue at Malta

H.M.S. "Orion," at present employed as a Naval Reserve drill ship for Maltese seamen and stokers, or to supplant it with a vessel of more modern type.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) It is not in contemplation to make any alteration in connection with H.M.S. "Orion" at Malta, or the service on which she is employed.

Motor Speed Limit in the Metropolitan Area.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he has made any application to the Local Government Board to limit the speed of motor-cars within the city and county of London; and, if not, in view of the racing that takes place, especially on Sunday, he will take the matter into consideration.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) No, Sir. I have no power to make an application under Section 9 of The Motor-Car Act, 1903, which is, I presume, the section the hon. Member has in mind. The proper authorities to make such an application are the London County Council and the Corporation of the City of London.

Damage to Roads, etc., in London by Heavy Motor Traffic.

MR. CATHCART WASON: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he is aware that, by the Order of the Local Government Board, motors weighing up to twelve tons are permitted to travel at the rate of twelve miles an hour; and if he will make inquiry as to the damage that such cars will inflict upon the streets, bridges, sewers, mains, and pipes of London.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The information before me shows that heavy motor-cars weighing up to twelve tons will have the axle weight of one axle in excess of six tons. Under the Order such cars are restricted to a maximum speed of eight miles an hour if fitted with pneumatic or soft or elastic tyres, and of five miles an hour if fitted with other kinds of tyres. I am not at present aware of any need for making the inquiry suggested.

Appointment of Samuel Bratton as Clerk to Kildare Petty Sessions—Production of Birth Certificate.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether Head Constable Samuel Bratton, lately appointed to the position of clerk to the petty sessions of Kildare, produced a certificate of birth on joining the Royal Irish Constabulary; and whether he will give the contents of the same, stating the place and date of birth.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) A certified extract from the parish register of Magheraculmoney, county Fermanagh, was produced, showing that Mr. Bratton was born on July 12th, 1855.

Report of Irish Estates Commissioners.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to paragraphs IV., VI., and VIII. of the Report of the Estates Commissioners, in which they report the total failure of the Act to deal with congested estates, and the improvement of estates and untenanted land; and whether, in view of the promise made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover during the debate on the Act of 1903, the Government will take immediate steps so to amend the Act as to make it possible for the Estates Commissioners to deal with the congested areas in Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) My attention has been called to the paragraphs mentioned, but I cannot accept the conclusion which the hon. Member draws from them. He does not specify the promises to which he refers or indicate where they may be found. I find reported at pages 1578, 1579, of the Parliamentary Debates, Fourth Series, Vol. 124, the following remarks of my right hon. friend:—"When the State was conferring fresh rights and creating credit facilities it meant to have a say in the conduct of a policy intended to level up the bad part of the country and to cure congestion. His opinion was that the policy would meet with success." If these be the passages referred to they certainly do not support the construction placed upon them in the Question.

Irish Education—Rule 127 (b).

Mr. DILLON: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the date on which a copy of the new Rule 127 (b) was first submitted to the Commissioners at a meeting of the Board of National Education, the number of Commissioners present, the names of the Commissioners so present; the date, or dates, if any, on which the new Rule 127 (b) was submitted to the Commissioners of National Education, or to a Committee of the Board, for the formal and detailed discussion of the rule, with all its serious consequences; the number of Commissioners so present at these meetings of the Board or Committees of the Board and their names; the date on which the new Rule 127 (b) was approved by the Board, the number of Commissioners present, the number who voted for the new rule, the names of the Commissioners so present and voting.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The principle involved in Rule 127 (b), viz., that junior boys should be educated by female teachers, had long been recognised and approved by the Commissioners, who were fortified in their judgment by a consensus of opinion on the part of managers, inspectors, and other educationists. The subject was carefully considered by the Commissioners at special meetings held on March 30th, April 13th, and April 27th, 1904, and as a result the formal regulation now embodied in the rule was framed. This regulation was first submitted to the Commissioners at a meeting of the Board held on October 25th, 1904, when it was adopted unanimously by the fourteen Commissioners present. The new Code, including Rule 127 (b), was unanimously approved by the thirteen Commissioners present at a meeting of the Board on December 20th, 1904. The rule was not discussed in detail after its adoption on 25th October, for, in the circumstances mentioned, the necessity for such discussion did not arise. The names of the Commissioners who were present at the meetings of October 25th and December 20th, 1904, are set forth in my reply to the Question of April 17th† last, put by the hon. Member for North Leitrim.

Disposal of Site of Duke of York's School at Chelsea.

Mr. WHITMORE (Chelsea): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether any, and, if so, what, decision has been arrived at as to the disposal of the site of the Duke of York's Military School at Chelsea.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) No decision has as yet been reached with regard to the disposal of the site of the Duke of York's School at Chelsea.

Army Expenditure of Great Britain, India, France, Germany, Russia, and Japan.

Sir EDGAR VINCENT (Exeter): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state the Army expenditure of this country and of India in the years 1880, 1890, 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, and the Army expenditure of France, Germany, Russia, and Japan in the same years.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The required information is contained in the accompanying Return—

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† See page 28.

Return showing the Army Expenditure of Great Britain, India, France, Germany, Russia, and Japan, in the years 1880, 1890, 1901, 1902, 1903, and 1904.

Great Britain.

Financial year.	Expenditure from Imperial Funds.				Expenditure from Indian Funds.			Grand total of Army expenditure from Imperial and Indian Funds.
	Expenditure on Estimates.		Expenditure on loans.	Total expenditure.	Apart from war.	War expenditure.	Total expenditure.	
	Apart from war.	War expenditure.						
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1880–1881 - - -	17,653,920	—	109,182	17,763,102	12,490,042	4,505,776	16,995,818	34,758,920
1890–1891 - - -	20,776,587	—	962,128	21,738,715	14,913,418	—	14,913,418	36,652,133
1901–2 - - - -	28,528,574	64,132,300	1,749,487	94,410,361	15,703,482	—	15,703,482	110,113,843
1902–3 - - - -	28,716,627	40,146,900	1,662,294	70,525,821	17,279,770	—	17,279,770	87,805,591
1903–4 - - - -	31,486,880	5,241,700	3,262,900	39,991,480	17,792,405	—	17,792,405	57,783,885
1904–5 - - - -	28,830,000 *	550,000 †	3,370,000 ‡	32,750,000	20,443,100§	—	20,443,100	53,193,100

* Army Estimates, 1904–5.

† Additional Estimate for Somaliland, February 1905.

‡ Estimated.

§ Revised Estimate (Indian Military Budget).

Year.	France.	Germany.‖	Russia.	Japan.‖	
	Amount voted in Military Budget.**	Amount voted in Military Budget.**	Amount voted in Military Budget.	Financial year.	Amount voted in Military Budget.
	£	£	£	£	£
1880 - -	29,396,364	18,505,000	21,074,000	1882–3¶	858,811
1890 - -	28,416,262	35,975,000	25,346,000	1890–1891	1,271,316
1901 - -	27,774,581	34,005,129	36,067,333	1901–2	4,955,635
1902 - -	28,664,000	32,686,340	35,848,726	1902–3	4,699,510
1903 - -	27,593,478	31,880,455	36,647,089	1903–4	4,217,196
1904 - -	27,053,196	31,883,000	40,086,000††	1904–5	4,151,539 ††

‖ The German Estimates make no provision for pensions (approximately £5,000,000 a year), which are included in a separate Budget. The Japanese Estimates do not include pensions.

¶ The earliest figures available.

** The figures for France and Germany are exclusive of sums voted for troops in the Colonies. These cannot be given.

†† The extra expenditure for the Russo-Japanese War is not known.

N.B.—It is impossible to give the actual expenditure in all cases, as in some instances it has not been published. Moreover, in some cases the Naval Budgets make provision for certain items, such as coast fortification, which are of a military nature.

Position of Military Accountants in the Army Pay Department.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he has considered the question of the *status* of officers holding His Majesty's Commission who served in the late Army Pay Department, and are now required to act under the orders of civilian accountants, many years their juniors in age and service; and whether he will consider the possibility of placing military accountants under the orders of senior military accountants exclusively.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) It is a necessary consequence of the decentralisation of Army accounting that the Pay Department and the Accounts Branches of the War Office should be amalgamated into one Department, trained in the whole finance work of the Army, and available for service abroad as well as at home. Paymasters will, under the new arrangement sometimes serve under civilians and civilians under paymasters. In this, as in all other services, rank cannot depend solely on age and length of service; there will be cases, therefore, in which the Pay Department officer or civilian official in charge is younger or has less service than those serving under him. The interests of the officers of the Pay Department have been fully considered and carefully safeguarded, and upon the whole they distinctly benefit under the new arrangements.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Naval Assistance at Irish Evictions.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, having regard to the fact that the giving of aid to Irish sheriffs in the event of evictions does not come within the sphere of the ordinary duty of the officers and men of the Royal Navy, due notice will be given to persons desirous of joining the Royal Navy of their liability to be ordered to assist Irish sheriffs and police in the forcible ejectments from their homes of men, women, and children.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge): The duty of the officers and men of the Royal Navy to aid the sheriff in the execution of the King's writ, when called upon by him so to do, is one which falls upon them in common with all other citizens. Their service in the Navy does not impose that duty upon them, nor can it free them from it. The reply is therefore in the negative.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): Will the hon. Gentleman take steps to ascertain the views of the Navy with regard to assisting at Irish evictions?

MR. PRETYMAN: No, Sir.

Flogging in the Navy.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty under what Estimate are the expenses included which are incurred in the manufacture of cats-o'-nine-tails, which are kept on every British warship as part of the necessary equipment, and of the specially-prepared birches and canes formed after patterns kept in the dockyards for that purpose, and used in the flogging of boys and youths in the Royal Navy who have enlisted as bluejackets or in the engineering department of that service.

MR. PRETYMAN: Any such expenses are chargeable to Vote 8, Section 2.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Now that Lord Cawdor is inspecting the Fleet, will he look at the cats-o'-nine-tails and birches and canes? It will improve his mind.

Cost of Rifle Sights.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what is the cost of the sights to be affixed to the new rifle and modified Enfield.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): The estimated cost of sights is as follows:—Backsight of the short rifle, whether on the new or converted arm, or fitted to the long rifle, 7s. 6½d. each. Aperture sight 6d.; dial sight 9¼d.; adjustable barleycorn front-sight 4½d.

Army Finance—Payment of Troops in Ireland.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: On behalf of the hon. Member for North Wexford, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether any fresh arrangements are in contemplation for the payment of the troops in the various centres or depôts throughout Ireland; and, if so, whether such changes will involve the withdrawal of the banking business connected with the payments in question from the various Irish banks which have hitherto transacted it and will concentrate the whole of it in the hands of the Bank of Ireland alone; and, if so, whether, in view of the recently-adopted system of decentralisation, he will inquire into the matter, in view of the effect upon the banks of any arrangement of the character in question.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Under the new system the Army Accounts for each Command will be kept at the Headquarters of the Command, and the local officers will cease to hold cash. This necessarily involves changes in former banking arrangements. In accordance with the principle of decentralisation the choice of a bank or banks is left to the discretion of the local authorities.

Judicial Appointments in the Colonies.

MR. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can state in how many instances since the 1st January, 1902, appointments have been made to judicial and other legal offices in the West African and other Colonies and Protectorates under the charge of the Colonial Office; and in how many of those instances have the appointees been members of the English, Scotch, and Irish Bars respectively.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): Since the 1st January, 1902, twenty-four appointments to judicial and other legal offices in British Colonies and Protectorates have been made by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, of which twenty-three were gentlemen from the English and one from the Irish Bar.

Powers of the Transvaal Legislative Assembly.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Legislative Assembly of the Transvaal will have any power to amend or reject any amendments made by the Governor in any law, under Article X. of the proposed Constitution, or what course will be open to the Legislative Assembly, in the event of their dissenting from such amendment of a law; and whether any rules or orders in this matter have as yet been framed and will be laid before Parliament.

MR. LYTTELTON: The amendments made by the Governor are merely for the consideration of the Legislature. A similar provision exists in, *e.g.*, the Constitution Act of the Commonwealth of Australia, Section 58. No rules or orders have been framed.

Lord Kitchener.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether Lord Kitchener has tendered his resignation of the position of Commander-in-Chief of the Army in India; and, if so, will he say whether that resignation, if accepted, will take effect in July next; and what is the reason of the tender of his resignation of the Indian command by Lord Kitchener.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): Lord Kitchener authorises me to state that he has not tendered his resignation, and there is therefore no question of accepting or not accepting.

Lord Curzon's Policy.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he has received resolutions passed at public meetings in India, and, in particular, resolutions passed at a mass meeting in Madras on the 22nd March, condemning the policy and administration of Lord Curzon, and urging his recall in the interests of good government in India; and what reply, if any, has he given to the senders of these resolutions.

*MR. BRODRICK: I have seen copies of some of the resolutions in question, but they have not been formally submitted to me. I do not think it necessary to take any steps with regard to them.

Indian Plague—Cost, Etc., of Scientific Investigation.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India what is the estimated cost of the scientific investigation into plague in India, and what proportion of this expenditure will be borne by the British Treasury; whether he will state what success has attended the work on Dr. Haffkine's system; whether the scientific expedition will have its headquarters at the Pasteur Institute at Kassauli; and whether the present investigation will proceed on the line of bacteriological research.

*MR. BRODRICK: The expenditure is estimated at £5,000 for the current year. No portion will be borne by the British Treasury. Inoculation is a valuable preventive, but it is not popular, and its effects are not regarded as permanent. The question as to the headquarters of the expedition will be settled locally between the Government of India and the head of the expedition, while the line of investigation will be determined by the scientific societies controlling the work. I have no doubt that bacteriological research will be largely resorted to.

Indian Congested Districts and the Plague.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the congested condition of the towns suffering from plague, he will invite the Government of India to give out building sites in healthy localities on easier terms to the poorer classes, and reduce the fees on timber and other building materials.

*Mr. BRODRICK: In Bombay and Calcutta, where the question of congestion is most serious, the Government is actively promoting the provision of additional building accommodation for the poorer classes. Elsewhere such overcrowding as exists is due to the habits and predilections of the people rather than to the absence of building land or dearness of materials. In plague-smitten localities assistance to move is often offered to the inhabitants, but is not infrequently refused.

Redemption of Annuities.

Mr. MARKS (Kent, Thanet): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state whether he contemplates any action in respect of the redemption of the $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. Annuities, 1905, created under the powers of the first Section of the National Debt (Conversion of Stock) Act of 1884, which were to be redeemable after the 5th of January, 1905.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.): No, Sir. I do not propose to take any action under the powers vested in me.

General Medical Council.

Mr. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid): On behalf of the hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty, I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will take such steps as may be necessary to secure the representation of laymen on the General Medical Council.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's): Perhaps I may be permitted to reply to this Question. Under the Medical Act, 1886, Section 7, the General Council consists of members nominated by the Privy Council and by the Royal Colleges and a number of other learned bodies, and of elected representatives of medical practitioners. There is nothing in the Act to prevent the nominating bodies choosing laymen; but I am informed that no representations have ever reached the Privy Council Office in favour of the course proposed in the Question.

Aliens Bill—Cost of Administration.

Mr. BRIGHT (Shropshire, Oswestry): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can now state what is likely to be the annual cost of administering the Aliens Bill.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: It is obvious that any estimate that can be framed at the present time must be to a great extent conjectural. I have, however, prepared an estimate of the probable cost of administration, confining it to the provisions for preventing the immigration of undesirables, since it is impossible to forecast the expenses of expelling alien criminals, etc. This shows an annual expenditure of £24,000.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.): A year.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: Yes.

Vagrancy Convictions.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the case of Alfred Carr, a painter out of work, with no previous convictions against him, who was tried before the magistrate at Marylebone, on April 20th, and sentenced to fourteen days imprisonment with hard labour for begging on the streets; and whether, in view of this sentence, and of the man's previous character, he proposes taking any action in the matter and to prevent its repetition.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I have already made inquiries into this case. It appears to have been one of the numerous instances of following and pestering foot passengers—a practice which has latterly been much on the increase in the district. There were thirteen such charges on the day in question, out of a list of forty prisoners. A fine in such cases is of course inapplicable, and the only punishment that can be given is imprisonment. I do not propose to take any action in the matter, as I have no reason to believe that the London magistrates exercise harshly the discretion which the law entrusts to them in these cases.

Identification of Motor-Cars at Night.

Mr. CALDWELL: On behalf of the hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will call for reports from the Metropolitan Police, with a view to ascertain to what extent difficulty is experienced in identifying motor-cars at night through the numbers being imperfectly lighted, or wholly or partly obscured.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: Yes, Sir, I have done so.

The Markyate Motor-Car Accident.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Executive will be able to take any measures to secure the attendance at the Hertford Assizes of the chauffeur who on Saturday last was committed for trial on a charge of having killed a child, and for whom absolutely insufficient bail has been accepted. Will steps be taken to secure that the man shall not abscond from the country?

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: The magistrates in their discretion have accepted bail. I have no power to interfere.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Of course he has not. [Cries of "Order."] Do you wish children to be murdered? Has not the right hon. Gentleman power to exercise surveillance, by way of the police or otherwise, to prevent his escape from justice?

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I have no further power; if I have I will exercise it.

Inspection of Laundries.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to a report made by the Chief Inspector of Factories and Workshops, in which he states that 144,038 women and girls are working in laundries that are not regulated by the Factory Acts; and whether he proposes to take any action in the matter.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I have had before me the report to which the hon. Member refers. I may perhaps explain that the Factory and Workshop Act only applies to laundries carried on by way of trade and for purposes of gain, and further, domestic laundries and laundries attached to religious and charitable institutions are expressly excluded from the operation of the Act. To extend the Act to such laundries would need legislation. Such legislation is, I think, desirable, but I fear I cannot undertake to introduce it at present.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): Has the right hon. Gentleman fully satisfied himself that these women and girls are not working in these institutions for the purpose of gain?

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I have not made definite inquiries, but, as I have said, the Act only applies to public laundries conducted for the purpose of gain and fresh legislation would therefore be required to deal with these houses.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT: Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire how many of these women and girls are engaged in institutions carried on for the purpose of gain? This is a very important matter.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I will get the inspector to look into the report.

Mr. WILLIAM MOORE (Antrim, N.): Did not the right hon Gentleman's predecessor give a pledge some years ago to introduce legislation on this matter?

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I am not aware of it.

West Indian Mail Service.

MASTER of ELIBANK (Edinburgh, Midlothian): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he will state whether it is the intention of the Government to finally ratify the proposed contract with the Elder, Dempster Line to carry His Majesty's mails between this country and the West Indies and British Guiana.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): A full statement of the course followed in this matter has been embodied in a despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Governors of the colonies concerned. This despatch has been laid on the Table of the House, and will be in the hands of hon. Members very shortly, and will give the information wished for by the hon. Member in a fuller and more convenient form than can be done by Question and Answer.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Will the noble Lord say what provision has been made for the carrying of the mails in the interval?

LORD STANLEY: No new contract has been made. The mails will be sent by any steamer that may be available.

MR. BRIGHT: Will the noble Lord publish the Reports received from the different colonies on this subject?

LORD STANLEY: That does not come under my Department. If the hon. Member will wait for the statement I have promised he will see the main one is dealt with if not all of them.

Split Duties in the Post Office.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that in a number of smaller provincial head post offices duties exist that require telegraphists to make three separate attendances spread over fourteen or fifteen hours before completing their ordinary eight hours work per day; and whether he will state what steps are being taken to reduce these divided attendances in accordance with the assurance given by the Department before the Bradford Committee.

LORD STANLEY: I am aware that such is the case, and I can only repeat the statement made by the official witness before the Bradford Committee, that "every effort is made to arrange the hours of duty as conveniently as possible, but they must necessarily be adapted to the requirements of the work and broken and irregular hours are often unavoidable." It is, however, the rule that the duties should be arranged to admit of nine clear hours off duty.

Passenger Traffic between Harwich and the Hook of Holland.

SIR ERNEST FLOWER (Bradford, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he will state the number of passengers between Harwich and the Hook of Holland, and to and from those ports during each of the last five years.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BONAR LAW, Glasgow, Blackfriars): I regret that I am not in a position to give the desired information.

SIR ERNEST FLOWER: It it the fact that this information is obtainable at every other port?

MR. BONAR LAW: We have absolutely no power to obtain the evidence. If they do not wish to give it they will not do so, and if they do not object they will give it to my hon. friend.

SIR. ERNEST FLOWER: Will the hon. Gentleman ask for it?

MR. BONAR LAW: I have no objection.

SIR ERNEST FLOWER: Do the Great Eastern alone of all companies refuse the information?

MR. BONAR LAW: We get a good deal of information from them.

*MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): These figures appear in the Consular Report for every port except this one. Will the hon. Gentlemen represent to this company that they are the only company which withholds the information?

[No Answer was returned.]

Taff Vale Railway Accident.

MR. BELL (Derby): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade if his attention has been called to an accident which occurred to Thomas Jones, pilot guard, in the employ of the Taff Vale Railway Company, by falling off a truck of coal, upon which he was compelled to ride whilst working his train over the Roath Branch on April 27th; and if he will cause an early inquiry to be held with a view to prevent further similar accidents.

Mr. BONAR LAW: Yes, Sir. An inquiry will be held into the circumstances attending this accident.

Burnley Bank Top Accident.

Mr. BELL I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he is aware of an accident which occurred at Burnley Bark Top, Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, on April 19th last, to the 12.50 a.m. goods train, Colne to Phillips Park, and that the train on arrival at Burnley consisted of seventy-two loaded trucks, again attached thirty-nine loaded and two empty wagons more, making a total of 111 loaded and two empty waggons, and a tonnage of 990 tons, requiring two additional engines to assist at the rear of the train, which caused the 80th to the 85th wagons inclusive to be derailed and blocking the lines for several hours; and whether he will cause an inquiry to be made respecting the working of such long trains, and the relative effect upon the safety to the men employed and the travelling public, and report thereon.

Mr. BONAR LAW: An accident of this character has been reported by the railway company as having occurred on the morning of April 20th, and an inquiry into the circumstances will be held by one of the Inspecting Officers of Railways. When the officer's report has been received, the Board of Trade will consider whether there are grounds for any further inquiry of the nature indicated in the concluding part of the hon. Member's Question.

Joint Stock Companies and the West Australian Gold-Mining Industry.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade if he will invite the attention of the Committee on Joint Stock Companies, now sitting at the Board of Trade, to a speech recently made to the shareholders of the Golden Horse Shoe Estates Company by Sir John Purcell, a former Registrar of Joint Stock Companies, denouncing certain practices which have been, and are still being, carried on in the City of London to the detriment of the gold-mining industry of Western Australia; and whether His Majesty's Government have received any communication from the Agent-General for Western Australia suggesting that some joint action might be expediently taken for the purpose of preventing future gold-mining scandals.

Mr. BONAR LAW: The attention of the Committee which is now sitting shall be directed to Sir John Purcell's speech, though it is very doubtful whether the evils of which he speaks can be cured by any legislation in this country. No communication has been received by the Board of Trade from the Agent-General for Western Australia.

Illegal Trawling off the Sutherland Coast.

Mr. LEVESON-GOWER (Sutherland): I beg to ask the Lord-Advocate whether he is aware that Peter Thueson, of Grimsby, was cited to appear for trial at Dornoch Sheriff Court on Tuesday, 2nd inst., for trawling within the three mile limit off Loth, on the east coast of Sutherland on April 12th, and that, on accused appearing for trial, the sheriff, in respect that no evidence was produced in support of the complaint, dismissed the accused; and if he will explain the reason why the evidence for the prosecution was not forthcoming at the trial.

The LORD-ADVOCATE (Mr. Scott Dickson, Glasgow, Bridgton): The Answer to the first part of the hon. Member's Question is in the affirmative. I am informed that, according to usual practice, the Procurator Fiscal arranged for the attendance of the Crown witnesses at the hour fixed for the trial. These witnesses, who were coming from Cromarty, were advised that they would reach Dornoch earlier if they travelled by the Meikle Ferry instead of going round by the railway. Unfortunately they were detained at the ferry, with the result that they did not arrive in Court until after the Sheriff Substitute had dismissed the complaint.

Mr. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): Cannot the right hon. Gentleman make a more liberal allowance for these fishermen than in ordinary cases, seeing that they can only give evidence at great cost?

Mr. SCOTT DICKSON: I am afraid I cannot make any exception.

Antrim Crown Solicitor and Sessional Crown Solicitor of Belfast.

Mr. JOSEPH DEVLIN (Kilkenny, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he will state the reasons for the amalgamation of the positions of Crown Solicitor of county Antrim and Sessional Crown Solicitor of Belfast; and what economies will be effected by the new arrangement.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.): The Irish Government many years back came to the conclusion that it was most desirable, having regard to the efficiency of the public service as well as to considerations of economy, to unite where possible the offices of Crown Solicitor and Sessional Crown Solicitor. Mr. Bates was originally appointed to the office of Crown Solicitor on the terms that he should accept the minor office if required. In pursuance of that arrangement the offices have now been united. The salary of the combined office has not yet been fixed, and I cannot therefore state the precise amount of the saving.

*Mr. SLOAN: Is it not the fact that although the arrangement was in force during the tenure of office of the last Sessional Crown Solicitor it was not carried out?

Mr. JOSEPH DEVLIN: Was not the arrangement made by a former Government in the interests of economy? What Government was it?

Mr. ATKINSON: I am not aware by what Government the Minute was issued originally, but it has been in existence several years.

Charges against Sergeant-Major Murphy, Connaught Rangers.

Mr. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he is aware that, in the course of a magisterial investigation in Mullingar into certain charges against Sergeant-Major Murphy, of the Connaught Rangers, it was stated by the Crown Solicitor that he had instructions from the Attorney-General to object to the jurisdiction of the magistrates in regard to a charge of a serious character alleged to have occurred outside Westmeath; and whether, if there be no jurisdiction in the Westmeath magistrates, who have returned this man for trial in Westmeath, to enter into the other charge, it is the intention of the authorities to proceed against him in the county where the other and graver offence is alleged to have been committed.

Mr. ATKINSON: One offence was alleged to have been committed in county Westmeath, and another of a similar character at Finner Camp, county Donegal. The Westmeath Justices had no power to deal with the latter case, and the Crown Solicitor, by my directions, so informed them. Both cases depend substantially on the testimony of the same witness. I decline to announce the intended action of the Crown pending the result of the first trial.

Mr. HAYDEN: Am I to imply that the action of the Government will depend on the result of the case now before the Court?

Mr. ATKINSON: No, but until the result is known I must decline to state the intentions of the Government.

The Dursey Island Eviction.

Mr. GILHOOLY (Cork County, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether H.M.S. "Stormcock" conveyed the agents of the Bantry Estate to Dursey Island on the occasion of the recent eviction.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.): Perhaps I may be permitted to reply to this Question. The Answer is in the affirmative. It was necessary that the landlord's representatives should be present in order both to point out to the sheriff the holding from which the eviction was to be effected, and also to receive possession of the premises after the eviction. The island is inaccessible from the mainland except in very calm weather, and no boat could be obtained locally by the landlord's agents. In these circumstances, and in accordance with precedent, it was considered necessary and proper to afford a passage to the agents.

Mr. GILHOOLY: But on various other occasions when he has visited the island, has the agent found any difficulty in getting a boat? Is it the intention of the Government in future to place His Majesty's ships at the call of the agents?

Mr. WALTER LONG: No.

Captain DONELAN: Are the naval operations at Dursey Island responsible for the postponement of the naval manœuvres?

[No Answer was returned.]

Irish Drainage Authorities.

Mr. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in many districts in Ireland in which drainage works are urgently required no drainage boards exist; and, if so, whether the Government would consider it advisable to introduce a Bill constituting the county councils respectively the drainage authorities for such districts in order that the authorities so constituted might exercise the powers conferred upon drainage boards by 26 and 27 Vic., c. 88, and the several Acts amending the same or incorporated therewith, with suitable provisions for the creation of joint drainage districts embracing two or more counties.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The question of amending the law on this subject is one which requires, and will receive, careful consideration. The Government are not at present prepared to introduce such legislation.

Irish Department of Agriculture—Staff Grievances.

Mr. O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the names of the local public bodies who have made representations to the Department of Agriculture in connection with the alleged inequality in the treatment of its staff; and what steps, if any, the Department proposes to take to satisfy these bodies of the justice or otherwise of their complaints.

Mr. WALTER LONG: It will be more convenient to furnish with the Votes an Answer to this Question, and, with the hon. Member's permission, I will adopt that course.

Smallpox at Mullingar and Athlone.

Mr. HAYDEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that smallpox was recently introduced into Mullingar and Athlone through two men who had been landed at Southampton from the steamship "Nile"; whether he can state the steps taken by the local authorities to prevent the spread of the disease, and to what extent these steps were dependent on the consent of the persons who had come in contact with those affected; and what was the cost of the precautions taken.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Yes, Sir. The steps taken in the matter were: the isolation of patients, and also of "contacts" as far as possible; the disinfection of premises; the disinfection or destruction of infected clothes, etc.; and the vaccination or re-vaccination of contacts. The latter cannot be isolated except with their own consent. The cost at Mullingar was £52 16s. The cost at Athlone has not yet been ascertained.

Mr HAYDEN: Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the advisability of introducing legislation on this subject in view of the danger?

Mr. WALTER LONG: This is a question which affects the whole kingdom. It is one of an extremely difficult and contentious character, but it is of the utmost importance and I will consider it.

Smallpox and Isolation.

Mr. HAYDEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Local

Government Board for Ireland recently wrote to the Athlone Board of Guardians that they had no power to detain two persons who had come in contact with persons just arrived in Mullingar from Southampton and who were suffering from smallpox, and that these men voluntarily submitted to isolation in the Union Hospital and there developed the disease; and, if so, in view of the consequences which might be involved to the whole community had these men continued their avocations, he will introduce a Bill to confer the power to isolate such "contacts" upon the proper authorities in Ireland.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The facts are as stated in the first part of the Question. As already pointed out, the isolation of smallpox "contacts" cannot be effected except with the consent of such persons. In ordinary circumstances, it is held to be unnecessary to isolate the inmates of dwellings invaded by smallpox in districts in which the sanitary laws are properly administered and vaccination is efficiently carried out. I see no reason, therefore, for legislation on the subject.

Irish Land Purchase Agreements.

Mr. JOSEPH DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to cases in which landlords about to sell their estates have compelled non-judicial tenants to sign agreements for judicial rents with the object of bringing them within the zones and evading inspection for value, and also provisional agreements for purchase, and that pressure for arrears of rent has been applied for this purpose; and, if so, have the Commissioners been instructed to get holdings to which such agreements relate inspected for value and the price fixed without regard to any agreements which the tenants may have signed.

Mr. WALTER LONG: No case has been brought under the notice of the Estates Commissioners in which a purchaser has alleged that he has been compelled to sign a judicial agreement under pressure for arrears of rent. The 10th Section of the Act of 1885 provides a remedy in any such case. That section gives the Land Commission equitable powers, on the principles acted upon by the Court of Chancery, to vary or rescind any agreement which may have been obtained by duress.

Greencastle Ratepayers and the Belfast Corporation.

Mr. JOSEPH DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a meeting of the ratepayers of Greencastle, held on Monday, May 1st, 1905, to protest against the manner in which the residents in that district had been treated by the Belfast Corporation in regard to the questions of sewerage and tramway extension; whether he is aware that the sanitary condition of the district, owing to imperfect drainage, constituted a constant danger to the public health; that a drainage scheme had been submitted to the Local Government Board, which had refused to grant borrowing powers until land for a pumping station had been acquired, and which also alleged that the proper formalities for a loan had not been complied with; whether any attempt had been made recently by the Belfast Corporation to comply with the requirements of the Local Government Board; and, if not, whether he will take steps to compel the corporation to have the matter dealt with without further delay.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Board have already held an inquiry into an application for a loan for drainage works in this district, and are prepared to sanction the loan when a site has been acquired and their requirements as to plans have been complied with. The corporation are negotiating for the purchase of a site, and the Board are in correspondence with them on the subject. The Board have no functions as regards tramway extension.

Orange Band at Portadown—Visit to the Catholic Quarter.

Mr. JOSEPH DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, on Easter Monday last, an Orange band from Coalisland attempted to go through the Catholic quarter of Portadown; that the police available at the time would have been helpless in the event of a riot; and that, at the time the Orangemen were endeavouring to enter the Catholic quarter, the district inspector was absent, and there was no one in charge of the police; and whether, seeing that year after year crowds of Orangemen assemble in Portadown for the purpose of attacking the Catholics there, and that there are but two alternative routes, viz., by Montague Street and Charles Street, or the walk by which Orange processions and bands could proceed through Portadown without entering the Catholic quarter, and in view of the conduct of these mobs and the rioting to which they almost invariably lead, he will issue an order prohibiting such assemblies from marching through the Catholic quarter of the town; and whether, in view of the fact that a Catholic named Faloon was shot dead in Portadown on Easter Monday, he will issue special instructions with regard to the possession of firearms in the district.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers this Question I should like to draw attention to a sentence in it declaring that year by year Orangemen assemble in Portadown for the purpose of attacking the Catholics there. I submit that the conclusion of that sentence is an abuse of the rules of the House. In the first place it is quite untrue.

*MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The Question had better be answered.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: I submit it is an infraction of the rules of the House to make an assertion of that kind, and I ask for your ruling.

*MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: My attention has only recently been drawn to the sentence and I certainly think it is unfortunate that it appears in the Question.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN: It is the principal point of my Question.

MR. WALTER LONG: I can only answer as to the facts. It is obvious that the assertion referred to is based on pure matters of opinion, as to which I can have no information. The Coalisland band marched into Portadown by the direct and customary route, which happens to pass through a Catholic locality. A force of thirty police under a head constable was present for the preservation of the peace, but I am glad to say that no disturbance arose. The district inspector was present in the town, in general charge of the police arrangements. The practice of these processions in marching by the route in question is one of long standing, and no change in the practice appears to be necessary. The unfortunate murder of the man Faloon was in no way connected with any sectarian disturbance. The man charged with the murder is believed to be insane. The incident does not afford sufficient grounds for prohibiting the possession of firearms in the district.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN: On what evidence does the right hon. Gentleman say that the man who committed this base assassination, which I claim was political, was not sane?

MR. WALTER LONG: I said the man was believed to be insane.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): By whom?

MR. WALTER LONG: That is the information I have received.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE: Is it in order to discuss a case which is *sub judice*?

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN: And is it in order for the Chief Secretary to state that a man now awaiting his trial is insane?

*MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: If a case is *sub judice* it is not in order to discuss it.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE: Then it ought not to have appeared in the Question at all.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that when this murderer was driven through the streets of Portadown he was cheered by the mob? How can the right hon. Gentleman say it was not a sectarian murder?

*Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the accused man is not a member of the Orange order?

Mr. JOSEPH DEVLIN: On what does the right hon. Gentleman base his statement that the man is insane?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I only said he was believed to be insane.

Mr. DILLON: By whom?

*Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER ruled that notice should be given of the Question.

Mr. JOHN O'CONNOR: Why do the Orangemen go into this district if not for the purpose of attacking the Catholics?

*Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER stopped further Questions by calling on the next one on the Paper.

Sir Antony MacDonnell.

Mr. WILLIAM MOORE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the recent interview at Athenry between the Under-Secretary and Mr. Thomas Higgins, the chairman of the executive of the North Galway branch of the United Irish League, was arranged by the Under-Secretary; if this was done with the previous knowledge or sanction of the Chief Secretary; if their conversation related to the peace of the district; if any minute or report of this meeting has been furnished by the Under-Secretary; and, if so, does it appear why such an interview was necessary; and, if the Under-Secretary, in fact, acted beyond his authority in this matter, what steps will be taken by the Government.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Under-Secretary had arranged, at the request of the Congested Districts Board, to visit Galway on the business of the Board before I entered office, and had also agreed with the agent of the Maxwell Estate to endeavour to effect an agreement in regard to the dispute existing there between the landlord and tenants. I expressed my approval of the intended visit, but indicated certain limitations in the Under-Secretary's inquiries which Sir Antony MacDonnell informs me he strictly observed. The Under-Secretary met men of various classes, and on all suitable occasions made it clear that the commission of outrage or acts of intimidation and boycotting would seriously retard the success of the Land Purchase Act, and could not possibly be tolerated by the Executive Government. The Under-Secretary had an interview with Mr. Higgins, who was reported to him from different sources as possessing much influence with the people. He was told that he was Chairman of the District Board, but was not informed that Mr. Higgins was also officially connected with the United Irish League. This fact came to the Under-Secretary's knowledge subsequently from the newspapers.

Mr. WILLIAM MOORE: Then does the right hon. Gentleman approve the interview?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I have said it was undertaken with my full knowledge and approval.

Mr. WILLIAM MOORE: I understand from the Answer that the Chief Secretary did not know that Mr. Higgins was to be interviewed. I ask him, if he had known, would he have approved of it?

Mr. WALTER LONG: What I did not know was that Mr. Higgins was a prominent official of the United Irish League; and that was not known by the Under-Secretary.

A NATIONALIST MEMBER: Is it a crime?

The Chief Secretary and the Belfast Orangemen.

Mr. JOSEPH DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, during his recent visit to Belfast, he had an interview with the leaders of the Orange Association; whether this interview took place with the sanction of the Cabinet; if this conversation related to the peace of Belfast, Portadown, and Lisburn; if any minute or report of this meeting has been furnished by the Chief Secretary to the Prime Minister; if so, does it appear why such an interview was necessary; whether the interview was authorised; and what steps the Government propose to take in the matter.

Mr. WALTER LONG: This Question does not appear to me to be seriously meant, and is undeserving, therefore, of a reply. If it be serious, it has no foundation in fact.

Mr. JOSEPH DEVLIN: I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that all my Questions are perfectly serious.

Congested Districts (Scotland) Bill.

Mr. CALDWELL: On behalf of the hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty, I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will state when he proposes to proceed with the Congested Districts (Scotland) Bill.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): I am afraid I cannot fix a date at present.

Punishment for Reckless Motor-Car Driving.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been directed to the number of accidents, the result of the reckless driving of motor-cars, and to the punishment, usually by way of fine, inflicted on the delinquents; and whether, having regard to the danger of motor-car driving to the public, the Government will institute an inquiry into the working of the Motor Act with a view to the reconsideration of the system under which these carriages are used and for the framing of fresh regulations in reference to their use.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that the crime of reckless driving is one which is distinctly recognised by that Act, and that very substantial penalties may be enforced against it. These penalties will no doubt be and ought certainly to be enforced.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Is the right hon. Gentleman not aware that many offenders are let off with a caution? I think that the right hon. Gentleman himself has been an offender.

Captain DONELAN: Does the right hon. Gentleman know that another child was killed by a motor-car on Saturday?

[No Answer was returned.]

Ministers and Directorships.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the fact that members of the present Administration hold amongst them upwards of seventy directorships of public companies, he will insist on resignation by the gentleman whom he may appoint to the vacant Junior Lordship of the Treasury, if he be a public company director, of his public company directorships.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member knows my views on this subject, and I do not accept his facts. But the general opinions which I hold on the question of holding office under the Government and directorships have often been stated to the House.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman in making these appointments will bear in mind that the present Gentlemen connected with the Treasury hold no fewer than ten directorships among them.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No Sir, I do not think that that affects the question.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs) asked what business would be taken on Wednesday.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I propose to take the Committee stage of the Agricultural Rating Bill, and I hope to take the Budget on Monday.

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich): When will the Second Reading of the Unemployed Bill be taken? We are anxiously waiting for it.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am anxious to proceed with it, but the hon. Member will understand that there are other measures which must be taken this week and next week.

Mr. BELL: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Trades Disputes Bill passed through Committee to-day? Will he give facilities to pass it through the House?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Does the right hon. Gentleman intend to proceed with the Motion which stands in his name dealing with adjournments at Easter or Whitsuntide, and when does he propose to take the debate?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It is a Motion which in the present condition of public business I see no opportunity of dealing with, except it is passed as an uncontentious proposal after 12 o'clock. It will not be proceeded with to-day.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Will the right hon. Gentleman accept my Amendment as being uncontentious?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I will consider that.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: What Supply will be taken on Thursday? I am aware that the Treasury Vote dealing with the Committee of Defence is the first order, but supposing this does not occupy the whole night, what will follow?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: My right hon. friend (Sir A. Acland-Hood) will endeavour to make arrangements with the right hon. Gentleman and his friends as to what is most convenient to put down as the second subject on Thursday.

Mr. LOUGH: What will be the second order on Wednesday?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: If the Government are fortunate enough to get the Committee stage of the Agricultural Rating Bill on Wednesday in reasonable time, there are one or two Admiralty Bills which the Department is anxious to see passed on general grounds. I think that these Bills will be second.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Not the Naval Prize Bill, I hope. I have an Amendment to that.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. Halsey reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure: Mr. Morrison; and had appointed in substitution: Sir James Heath.

Report to lie upon the Table.

TRADES UNIONS AND TRADE DISPUTES BILL.

Reported, with Amendments, from the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 154.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 154.]

Bill, as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 205.]

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

[Second Reading.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*Mr. ARTHUR HENDERSON (Durham, Barnard Castle) rose to move as an instruction, "That this House is of opinion that the provision of food for destitute and underfed children is essential to the effective administration of the education system, and desires to assure itself before assenting to the Bill that clauses will be inserted whereby the education authority shall ensure that every child under compulsory attendance at its schools shall receive proper nourishment before being subjected to mental or physical instruction."

*Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The Motion of the hon. Member is out of order, for the reason that it anticipates Amendments embodying the same principle which may be submitted in Committee on the Bill.

*Mr. ARTHUR HENDERSON: Can we have a guarantee that the Amendments proposed will be accepted in Committee or that they will be in order?

*Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I cannot say that.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): But does that ruling mean that they will be in order on the Committee stage?

*Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I have so far only ruled that the Motion is not in order now.

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich): Perhaps it would be best to discuss the general principle on the debate on the Second Reading.

*Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: That can be done on the Motion which I have put that the Bill be now read a second time.

*Mr. ARTHUR HENDERSON said he desired to point out what he considered to be an important defect in the measure now before the House. Before doing so he would like to offer his congratulations to the Government on the immense step forward which they had taken so far as this particular question of the feeding of children was concerned. The evidence of this forward move on the part of the Government was to be found in the Orders which were issued two or three days ago by the Local Government Board and by the Board of Education. But while he offered the Government his congratulations for having taken a step forward, it must not be assumed that he personally and those who were acting with him in this matter were in full approval of the policy outlined in those Orders. They did agree, however, that it was a matter for great satisfaction that the Government had at last admitted that so far as the underfeeding of children was concerned there was an existent serious evil, and that, in the second place, there was a public obligation to find a remedy for that serious defect in our national and social life. He welcomed that change of attitude on the part of the Government, and he would be glad if, in discussing that Bill, they could receive assurances from the right hon. and learned Gentleman who had charge of it that when the Committee stage was reached the Government would be prepared to show their consistency by giving encouragement to those who were anxious to amend the Bill in the direction of making provision for underfed children.

The question arose as to whether they who were introducing this important question, were justified in asking the Government to provide a remedy in that Bill, and to give facilities for dealing with that most important question. He thought they were justified, and that the need for immediate action had been clearly and definitely demonstrated. They had only to turn to the Report which had been issued by the Royal Commission on Physical Deterioration and also to the Report of the Royal Commission on Physical Training (Scotland) to find most important evidence in support of the step they were taking. They noted in connection with the Report of the Royal Commission on Physical Deterioration the following statement—

> "It was, nevertheless, acknowledged that the evils arising from underfeeding were so widespread, and in certain localities so pressing, that some authoritative intervention was called for at the earliest possible moment to secure that the education of the children who are obliged to attend school shall not be hampered and retarded by the physical condition thereby engendered."

That was a most important statement, made not by those who had engaged in this agitation in the country, but by a Royal Commission appointed by the present Government.

The Question might very properly be put how far the evil obtained in Scotland, for, after all, the Bill before the House dealt with Scotland and Scotland only. He thought, however, that they could clearly demonstrate that so far as Scotland was concerned the evil did prevail to a very considerable extent, and that the present was the most opportune moment for them to deal with the subject. To-day they were engaged in readjusting the machinery for education in Scotland, and the probabilities were that that Bill when it passed into law would control the whole machinery of education in Scotland, and would remain unaltered for some years to come. That being so, if there were such a defect in connection with the machinery as he had hinted at, surely this was the right time when it should be remedied. He would have to trouble the House with one or two other particulars so far as Scotland was concerned. He found that Dr. Mackenzie, the medical officer of the Local Government Board for Scotland, said that in the slums of Edinburgh a large proportion of the children were half-starved, and he agreed that to subject the half-starved child to the routine of a school would be the height of cruelty, and that the educational result would be poor. That was an authoritative statement of a medical officer of the Local Government Board for Scotland. Then a recent report, so far as Dundee was concerned, showed that a deplorable condition of things obtained in that city. They had further evidence in the Report of the Royal Commission on Physical Training in Scotland. This was what that Commission said on the subject—

> "We consider that the question of the proper and sufficient feeding of children is one which has the closest possible connection with any scheme which may be adopted for their physical equally with their mental work. It is evident that among the causes which affect the physical welfare of the population the lack of proper nourishment is one of the most serious. The subject demands special notice not only as regards the existing state of affairs, but still more in view of any increase of physical training through the State-aided schools which may commend itself."

They further said—

> "A large number of important witnesses—members of the medical profession, inspectors of schools, representatives of school boards, teachers, and others—were questioned on the subject, and they were unanimously of opinion that it was most desirable that increased attention should be paid to the feeding of children attending State-aided schools."

The Report of the Commission continued—

> "We entirely endorse that opinion."

It then went on to draw a contrast between the condition of children as seen in the poorest schools and the condition of children of parents who had altogether failed in their duty. Those latter children had, as a consequence of the default of their parents, been sent to the training ship at Moss Bank and to similar institutions, where sufficient food and physical training were given to them, and the contrast between them and the children in the poorest schools was both marked and painful. Thus it was clearly demonstrated that where the parents had absolutely failed to do their duty their children were in a better condition, inasmuch as by State-aid they had received that nourishment which was essential to their physical well-being, while the condition of the other poor children was not only marked but painful. This proved conclusively that so far as Scotland was concerned the evil existed to as great an extent as it did in either England or Wales.

In the debate the other day a great deal was said about the causes which had brought about this deplorable social evil, and no doubt there was a considerable difference of opinion in the House as to the real causes. He would venture to classify the children in the following order. First, they had destitute children whose parents were in extreme poverty for reasons that were really preventable. Secondly, there were those whose parents were in temporary poverty caused by enforced idleness; and thirdly, there were those, and he thought this was the most important section demanding the consideration of the House—those whose fathers' economic condition when they were in work was such as to preclude the possibility of their doing exactly as they would like to do in making provision for the nourishment of their children. A most important question the House had to consider was whether (whatever the cause of these children being exposed to the danger of their physical condition being completely undermined) it was in the public interest that this evil should be allowed any longer to go on unchecked. If they only remembered how deplorable the results were they would agree with him that it would be the worst policy possible to pursue to allow the evil to go on unchecked, in view of the danger to the race. The Report from which he had already quoted made some most emphatic observations on the matter of their responsibility. It proved, in the first place, that voluntary effort by itself had failed to cope with the extension of the evil. Then the Royal Commission on Physical Training in Scotland came to the conclusion—

"It should be one of the duties of school boards and school managers to inquire into cases of apparently insufficient feeding, and they should provide facilities for the provision of suitable food by voluntary agency without cost to the public funds, and should co-operate with those agencies in the organisation of this work."

Then, in another portion of the Report, they demonstrated emphatically how inadequate voluntary effort had proved, and they added—

"We think that power should be given to provide meals, and to demand from the parents payment to meet the cost."

He would trouble the House with only one more quotation, and it was an important one. Seeing that the Government insisted upon appointing Royal Commissions, it was desirable that they should appear to give some consideration to the findings of those Commissions unless, of course, they were going to accept the theory that the appointment of a Royal Commission was an easy way to provide a huge grave in which the Government might bury difficult problems. He found in the Report words to the effect that there was a general consensus of opinion that the time had come when the State should realise the necessity of ensuring adequate nourishment for children in attendance at schools. It was said to be the height of cruelty to subject half-starved children to the process of education, besides being a short-sighted policy, inasmuch as the progress of such children was inadequate and disappointing. If the House and the Government recognised the existence of such an evil—and they had strong and conclusive evidence that the Government had at last recognised it, because only a few days ago they issued an Order affecting England and Wales, whereas up to the present moment they had done absolutely nothing so far as Scotland was concerned—if, he contended, they recognised the evil, surely they ought on an occasion like that, when they were building up new machinery for educational purposes, to be prepared to make some arrangement and to incorporate some provision dealing with the evil.

The Government, if they liked, might adopt the plan which had been suggested in the Bill already before the House. The promoters of that Bill suggested that power should be given to the local education authority, when they found a number of children in their schools who were insufficiently or badly fed, to take the matter in hand, and to arrange for giving them certain meals daily. They also went so far as to suggest that power should be given to the education authority to recover the cost of the meals from the parents or guardians, where it could be clearly proved that such parents or guardians had the means to provide proper nourishment but had wilfully and culpably neglected their obligation to their children. He considered that if the Government would accept an Amendment of that nature in their new Scottish Education Bill in Committee, giving these limited, although probably sufficient, powers, they would be taking a step in the right direction. It should be noted that this proposal left the manner and the means of relief entirely in the discretion of the local education authority. There were other reasons why they considered that to be the best method of dealing with this evil. In the first place, it was most in harmony with the recommendations of the two Commissions to which he had already referred. They made that recommendation because they fully thought that where voluntary effort had been tried it had not proved in itself sufficient. They did not suggest that voluntary effort should be abandoned entirely, but that it might be made part of an arrangement with the local education authority. What they did want was that, without leaving out entirely all voluntary effort which had not proved sufficient, full responsibility for seeing that something was really done should be imposed on the local education authorities. That would be the best way of dealing with the evil from a practical, economic, and humane standpoint. The Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration agreed with the opinion of the Royal Commission on Physical Training that the preparation and cooking of meals for children habitually underfed should be regarded as one of the charges incidental to school management, and the Commission also expressed the sanguine belief that a few prosecutions would have a most salutary and stimulating effect in compelling neglectful parents to take a full share of their responsibilities.

He thought he had stated strong grounds on which to base an appeal to the Government to give some encouragement to those who desired to deal with that defect in their measure. In his opinion the Government had made a great mistake in bringing in this Bill without recognising the strong and emphatic evidence of their own Royal Commissions' Reports, for it might be that for a number of years to come they would be face to face with this evil in great centres like Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Dundee, and would not have given any legislative powers to the local authorities to deal with what was an admitted evil. He would conclude by again expressing his earnest hope that when they reached the Committee stage they would have the support of the Government in their endeavour to remove this great defect from the Bill.

*Sir HUGH SHAW-STEWART (Renfrew, E.) asked the House to allow him to say a few words on the question raised by the last speaker, as he was one of the members of the Royal Commission on Physical Training, from whose Report several quotations had been made. He did not propose to say anything on the general lines of the Bill, except to thank the Government for having introduced it, and to assure them that most of the Members representing Scottish constituencies would do all that they could to expedite its progress through the House. But there were one or two omissions from the Bill on which he would like to speak for a moment. One was the omission in reference to any scheme for dealing with underfed children. He was one of those who held very strongly the view that if provision was to be made for feeding the children the cost should be recovered from the parents, and he believed that the hon. Member for Camberwell was entirely of that opinion. But there was one difficulty connected with that suggestion which had to be faced, and that was the difficulty of dealing with parents who would not pay the fees. The Hon. Member had said that he would scarify those parents.

Dr. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): No. I said I would scarify those who could, but would not pay, but I did not say I would not scarify those who were too poor to pay.

*Sir HUGH SHAW-STEWART said he fully accepted that interpretation of the hon. Member's words, but he did not see how he proposed to scarify those parents. He did not think that a resolution passed by the school board would be sufficient to produce that result, and he did not know of any other way in which they could be got at. He was going to say that no resolution would scarify anybody. But he did recollect one occasion in that House when certain colonial statesmen were brought to the Bar because they had broken some constitutional rule, and they were brought up to be admonished by Mr. Speaker. Certainly those who were acquainted with the authority which surrounded Mr. Speaker's office, when they heard and saw those colonial statesmen admonished, came to the conclusion that they were scarified. But they were not going to scarify the public by means of resolutions passed by school boards, and he believed the only way in which they could deal with parents who would not pay the feeding fees for their children was to make paupers of them—to recover the money through the Poor Law. That was the gist of the recommendations of the Commission, and he wished to emphasise the conclusion they arrived at that no expense whatever should be thrown on school boards in respect of the provision of food. He was sorry that the right hon. Gentleman had not been able to incorporate any suggestions of that kind in his Bill. No doubt he had good reasons for abstaining from doing so, and he trusted he would explain them to the House later on.

There was one other omission, and that was in regard to the question of medical inspection. The Royal Commission went very fully into that question, and he would like to remind them that one of the members of the Royal Commission was at that time head of the Education Department for Scotland. He could assure the House they had very weighty evidence from the most skilled and influential witnesses in the country, and upon it they arrived at certain conclusions. They suggested that medical officers should act as consulting officers to school boards and should work with the local medical officers. They suggested further that medical officers of counties and burghs should give their services for a retaining fee, not exceeding £100 a year, which might fairly be provided from Imperial funds. Another paragraph of their Report suggested that the district medical officers should visit and report to the senior medical officer regarding the health of the children. He was quite aware that that provision would entail very considerable expense, and possibly that was the reason why the Government had not seen its way to embark on the enterprise. He would like further to draw attention to paragraph 160 of the Report, in which they suggested that sub-inspectors, male and female, should be appointed and should make occasional visits to the school and assist the teachers in testifying as to the health and cleanliness of the children. He was not sure that that was not the most important of all the suggestions they made. At any rate it was a practical one and it had the advantage of cheapness; it would not involve any large expenditure of money, and he was certain the hon. Member for Camberwell would bear him out in saying that the teachers would welcome the appointment of a few selected persons to assist them in these matters of cleanliness and sanitary habits, matters which were quite as important for young children to learn as lessons in geography and history. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman in the course of the debate would give some reason why the recommendations of the Royal Commission, arrived at after full and careful investigation and consideration, were not given effect to in the Bill.

MR. CHARLES DOUGLAS (Lanarkshire, N.W.) wished to associate himself with what had been said as to the importance of including in that Bill some provision for the feeding of necessitous children. He did not say that at all in the sense that he thought the Bill was an unwelcome one, because he believed it would do a great deal of good in Scotland, even if those provisions were not included. But he did sincerely hope that the Lord-Advocate and the Government would seriously and with an open mind consider this question and try to give some satisfaction to those who had been urging it on their attention. It was a matter of vital importance and it was one capable of being dealt with without any revolutionary proceedings. It was a matter to which in Scotland very special attention had been called, not only by the Royal Commission on Physical Training, but more recently by a very interesting and tragic document issued in Dundee under the auspices of the Social Union. It was a report drawn up by medical men, and it showed the enormous wastage of human life which was going on. He would not say more about that now, but he hoped that when they reached the Committee stage it would be found that the Government were willing to entertain these proposals.

He wished to say how cordially he welcomed, for his part, the reintroduction of this Bill, and how sincerely he trusted the Government intended to pass it into law. The main principle of the Bill, on which really its usefulness rested, was the enlargement of the local government areas for education purposes. He did not think it necessary to recapitulate the arguments by which they had justified that enlargement in the past. It was a reform which was calculated greatly to simplify and improve the position of teachers, and that, in itself, he thought, was the very important argument in its favour. It would increase the importance and the authority of the local education bodies—the school boards—and, in his opinion, make them much less amenable to anything that might be regarded as undue interference on the part of the Education Department, and it would enable them to really co-ordinate the different stages of education, and give a greater stimulus to the secondary education of the country. After a good deal of discussion and debate in that House in the previous year they had arrived at a very excellent solution of the difficult, practical question of the extension of the areas. That was a question which had been dealt with in different ways according to the merits of each particular case, and it was wise, he thought, to leave it as they now proposed to do to the decision of the authorities concerned. It was now intended to be incorporated in the clause of the Bill dealing with that matter, and he hoped that clause would really make it perfectly clear that the local authorities themselves, no less than the Secretary for Scotland, were to be real parties to any combination that might be effected; that that combination was not to take place behind their backs, but with their consent and concurrence. He hoped also that another arrangement which was made in the previous year, with regard to the management of schools, would be persisted in. It was then left in the hands of the school board to appoint managers, and it was very important in school administration to secure that management and control should go together. Nothing could be more unfortunate than that the actual management should be in different hands to those by whom the school was controlled. It was unfortunate for the managers themselves, because it was impossible to obtain from them the same kind of work as would be obtained if they had greater authority, and it was still more unfortunate for those who controlled the school, and who were not in daily contact with its administration, and so able to meet the problems with which school boards had to deal.

If there was any doubt before as to the necessity of provincial councils, or national councils, or some advisory body in Scotland with whom the board might officially deal that doubt might easily be set at rest by the events of the last year. The great argument against them had always been that there was a complete and adequate control over education in Scotland. It was two years since there had been an opportunity to discuss upon the Estimates educational affairs in Scotland, and no one who took an interest in Scottish education would think that once in two years was too often to bring the acts of the Scottish Education Department under review. The Government had made some difference in this Bill to their proposals of last year. They had steadily refused to create any national council with power to sub-divide itself into committees for local purposes. That would have been the simplest and most satisfactory course that they could have taken, but they had refused to take it. It was not a matter of principle, because whether there was one council with power to form itself into four local committees or whether there were four councils which had power to combine it was practically the same thing. He believed a sub-committee of a national council would be a far more efficient body in its way than any provincial council. He would like to see the functions of the provincial council further defined. A provincial or national council would fall very far short of their view of what it ought to be if it were merely a collection of estimable gentlemen nominated by the Education Department from what were called "educational experts." It was of vital importance that these councils should contain not only an element but a majority of other members who were delegated representatives of the school board within the area or province with which that council was to deal. That should not be left in the discretion of the Secretary for Scotland but should be dealt with in the Bill itself. He would also like to see more power given to the provincial councils; not that their functions should be altered; they should still remain an advisory body, but he would like to see a wide extension of the subjects upon which the opinion of the councils should be sought if these bodies were really to be consulted as to the essential parts of the administrative work of the Department.

As to the necessity for this Bill dealing with the treatment of those schools which were not under the charge of the school boards, the voluntary schools, there was a very general agreement. Many people believed that the duty of the State ought to be limited to supplying secular education, and that the teaching of theology formed no part of the business. That was not the state of affairs in Scotland, nor was it the state of affairs set up by the Bill, which persisted in giving to Scotland denominational education in the schools. So long as that was done it was essential that they should recognise the conscientious objections of the minority. No good cause ever prospered which was leagued with hardship and injustice. He was prepared to accept and welcome the proposals in the Bill to deal more equally with the minority in this matter. As to the manner in which it was to be done there were differences of opinion. The proposal of the Bill was to leave it to the local authority to give aid from the rates. It was certain that any aid must come from the rates if the matter was to be dealt with as a whole, but there was an opinion in Scotland that it could be dealt with by Parliamentary action. That was not the view of all, but, at the same time, if the money was to be given by Parliament to the schools it must be taken out of the Scottish Education Fund and from that part of it which otherwise would go in relief of rates, and there would be so much the less to go to the country as a whole in relief of rates. There were two ways by which that deduction might be made. It might be spread over the country as a whole, but that would be obviously unjust because those districts in which there were no voluntary schools would be made to contribute to those in which there were voluntary schools. The other way was to make the deduction in detail, and in proportion, in those parts of the country where voluntary schools existed. After all, what did it mean? It meant that they were giving the Education Department power to impose rates, because when they gave this power to withdraw some of this fund, they gave power to withdraw money which would otherwise go to the relief of rates in many districts. One of the greatest defects of the English educational system was that the local authorities had been deprived of the liberty they ought to have and desired to exercise. Many of the difficulties of the English Act were traceable to that single fault, and he would greatly deplore anything of that sort being introduced into the Bill for Scotland. They ought to jealously guard the right of each locality to the disposal of its own rates. Each case ought to be dealt with on its merits as it came before those whose knowledge of the circumstances enabled them to form an opinion upon it.

In conclusion, he ventured to express the same hope with reference to the Bill as a whole as he had expressed at the commencement of his speech. It was a very serious matter to hold a Bill of this sort over the heads of those carrying on the educational work of Scotland. The responsibility for the present state of things rested on the Government. They had introduced this Bill, which was a responsibility they ought not to take unless they intended to persevere with it and pass it into law. He therefore hoped that it would be eventually carried.

Sir JOHN GORST (Cambridge University) said the House was indebted to the hon. Gentlemen who had already spoken for calling attention to the serious defect in this Bill in not making any effort to deal with the question of hungry children. Neither the Government in general nor the Scottish Department in particular could leave this matter alone. The Scottish Department had had before them for a considerable time two very important Reports. They had had before them the Report of their own Royal Commission on the Physical Training of Children in Scotland, and they had had the Report of the Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration. Nor could they say the Scottish view was not adequately represented on both bodies, because on the Royal Commission on the Physical Training of Children in Scotland was Sir Henry Craik, the then head of the Scottish Department, and on the Committee on Physical Deterioration was that gentleman's successor in that office. Both those gentlemen joined in the Reports of that Commission and Committee, which declared that the physical condition of the children in the schools was such that it required immediate attention on the part of the Government. Not a single step had the Scottish Office taken upon the Reports of these two important bodies, and in the Bill now before the House they had omitted the question altogether. It had been ignored by them. They were like the Pharisee in the story of the good Samaritan. They had looked on these poor children and had passed by on the other side.

He desired to point out how the thing stood as regarded English children, because the President of the Local Government Board had stated clearly both in the House and the country, that in England a distressed child in a public elementary school had a legal right to be visited by a representative of the public authority and to be relieved and fed. Not only had the President of the Local Government Board admitted it, but he had taken the step of providing machinery, somewhat clumsy machinery it was true, but the best that could be provided without legislation, to secure that those children's rights should not remain in abeyance, but that they should be vindicated. In the schools, now, it was the duty of the teachers and managers to inquire into the condition of any child who was distressed, and to report, and it was the duty of the guardians to at once send their officer and relieve the child, and then afterwards take steps to recover the cost from the parents, and, if they were not able to pay, to make the relief out of the poor relief fund. What was the position with regard to Scotland? Because what had been done in this respect did not apply to either Scotland or Ireland, and he presumed that the children of both those countries had the same rights as children in England. He would like to know whether that was not a fact? Here, then, they had a right on the part of the child to live, and no step was taken either by Scotland or Ireland to put their children in the same position as English children. The Government could not leave this matter where it was. Before this Bill went further they must declare first what were the rights of Scotch children, and then what steps they proposed to take in order that those rights should be safeguarded.

On the face of the Bill there were many imperfections. For instance there was a provision that the school boards could spend school rates in medical inspection, but were they going to stop there? Had there not been medical inspection in many of the schools in Scotland and England every year? Excellent medical inspections had been made in Scotland and in England, in the Johanna Street Schools, but what was the result of the inspections of those schools in poor districts? It was that a great number of children in those poor schools were suffering from lack of food. That would be the result of the medical inspections in Scotland. What were they going to do? Were they going to stop there? The local authorities under this Bill had now power to spend the ratepayers' money on the provision of food, and the point he wished to put to the Lord-Advocate was that he should tell the House clearly, first, what were the rights of the children, and secondly, what were the steps which the Scotch Office were going to take analagous to those taken by the Local Government Board in England for enforcing those rights. What was the use of giving power to the new Scotch authorities to inspect the children if they did not give them power to mitigate the evils from which they suffered. He hoped this Bill would be carried through as everybody desired to see it passed. His only desire in rising was to raise, in the case of Scotland, this question which had been dealt with to some extent in the case of England, and which must in the future be dealt with in the case of both Scotland and Ireland.

*Mr. EDWARDS (Radnor) said, as was well known, they had had in Wales a great deal of trouble owing to the Education Act which was passed by the Government in 1902. He could not help thinking that much of that trouble might not have occurred if the Government had accepted the offer made by the hon. Member for the Carnarvon Boroughs, who was willing to take such a Bill as this for the solution of the difficulty. As the hon. and learned Member for Lanark very properly remarked, each locality should be allowed to control the expenditure of its own rates. Under Clause 3 of this Bill there was set up a system of school boards all through the country. That would have been a very proper way of dealing with education in Wales as well as in Scotland. Clause 17 of the Scotch Bill provided that—

> "It shall be lawful for the school board in any of the enumerated districts from time to time to commit the management of any school or schools under their charge, and, subject to the provisions of the Act, to delegate such of their powers as they may see fit in connection with the management of such school or schools, to managers appointed by them."

He wished that were the law in Wales, but he did not grudge it to Scotland. In Wales it was the parsons who appointed the managers of the schools, and not the public bodies like the county councils who were at the same time called upon to find the money for running the schools. There was a wide difference between the Bill now before the House and the Act of 1902. The Bill before the House sought to carry out the wishes of the people of Scotland, but the Act of 1902 did nothing of the kind in regard to the people of England and Wales. The Welsh laity would fully approve of the public control given by this Bill, but unfortunately there were other powers at work to induce the Government to pass the Act of 1902, and roughly speaking the clergy got their way. Why was it that they got their way? Was it for the benefit of education? The Government had shown by introducing this kind of measure for Scotland that they believed that a system of education which was controlled by school boards was better than a system which left education to voluntary agencies. One great merit of the Bill was that it did not arouse religious disputes as the Act of 1902 had done in both England and Wales. Why was it that the clergymen in England and Wales took up the position they did? They insisted that only the rudiments of knowledge should be taught in the elementary schools? Secular education was to be elementary, but apparently religious instruction was to be advanced. If it was right that only the rudiments of secular instruction should be taught it would appear equally right that only the rudiments of religious instruction should be given. The merit of this Bill as compared with the English Bill was that it allowed the majority to have its own way with regard to religious instruction. He felt sure that if the same rule were applied to Wales they would get rid of a good many of the difficulties now felt in that country. He could not understand why the Government which granted for Scotland the wishes of its people should refuse them in the case of Wales. The Government was supposed to be impartial, but it had not been so in regard to his own country. The majority in most of the parishes of Wales were Nonconformists, and if the principle underlying this Bill was given to the people of Wales it would often happen that in Welsh parishes, where there was only one school, not only the maintenance but the control of the staffing of that school would be given to the people of the parish. He protested against the treatment meted out to Wales in 1902. He approved of the principle of this Bill, but he held that it was equally applicable to Wales as to Scotland.

SIR ANDREW AGNEW (Edinburgh, S.) said that with regard to the supplying of meals to underfed children he fully sympathised with the view which had been expressed, and he hoped that in Committee the Lord-Advocate would be able to insert a provision dealing with the matter. As to the Bill itself, he had only two criticisms to make. He greatly regretted that the counties instead of the county districts had not been made the education areas. In many cases the county district would be much too small for a complete system of primary, secondary, and technical education. The county would in most cases provide a far more suitable area, and he could not understand why it had not been taken. That objection had doubtless been met to some extent by the power given to unite two or more county districts, but it would have been simpler to have taken the county and, in the rare cases where it was too large, divide it. It was always easier to divide a district than to get two or more authorities, each entitled to a separate existence, to agree to be united. Personally he would have liked to see the county the education district, and the county council the education authority. If that had been the proposal it would have rendered unnecessary the creation of an entirely new body for educational purposes, and saved one local election, of which there were already too many. The more local elections there were the less interest people took in them. Fully recognising the difficulties in the way of that proposal, he was quite prepared to accept the scheme of the Government, which he believed would work well and be generally acceptable to the people of Scotland.

His second criticism had reference to the financial arrangements of the Bill. Probably everyone would approve of the proposal that the various grants for education should be pooled, but he doubted whether all would be in favour of the inclusion of the residue grant of 1890 and a large portion of the equivalent grant of 1892. There was justification for the arrangement so far as the residue grant was concerned, because while the grant was given either for the relief of local rates or for technical education, it had been almost universally devoted to technical education. In fact, taking the whole of Scotland, three-fourths of the grant had been used for that purpose. But there was not the same reason for claiming the equivalent grant or any portion of it for inclusion in the education fund; it was given expressly for the relief of local rates and, with the exception of a very small part—about £500—had been so used. The proposal was that £100,000 should be devoted to the relief of rates, and that the balance—about £63,000, according to last year's figures—should go to the education fund. That meant that an additional burden of £63,000 would be laid upon the county and burgh rates. It might be said that it did not much matter, if the money had to be found, whether it was raised by the police, the school, or any other rate. That, however, was not the way the local authorities looked at the matter. It would have been much better to have let the present arrangement remain undisturbed, leaving the education authority to raise the money they required by an addition to the education rate. Moreover, it was not dealing fairly with the local authorities in Scotland as compared with those in England, inasmuch as under the Act of 1902 the equivalent grant was not touched, and consequently the amount for the relief of local rates in England remained undiminished. He hoped the Lord-Advocate would take this matter into consideration, and see if he could not leave the whole of the equivalent grant undisturbed. With that alteration he hoped the Bill would be carried through. It had met with a very friendly reception on both sides, and there was in Scotland a general desire for its speedy passage. He hoped, therefore, that after the Second Reading the Lord-Advocate would press forward the remaining stages as rapidly as possible, and that the Bill would be carried into law this session.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire) said the question of the feeding of the children was of the greatest importance, and although the matter was one of considerable difficulty, he hoped that in Committee the Government would be prepared to submit a plan. In regard to its main principles he welcomed the Bill of last year, and in its present form he thought he had still more reason to welcome it. But why was not the Bill of last year passed? He had never known a Bill to be received in a more reasonable spirit, but it was wilfully thrown aside by the Government in order that other measures might be forced through. He hoped that that would not be the case this year. The best answer to any possible charge of obstruction was the present Bill, it being a considerable improvement upon the Bill of last year, a result wholly due to the discussion which then took place. The Bill was not a controversial measure in the Party sense, but it was one of enormous importance to the Scottish people, inasmuch as it would probably form the basis of their education for a generation to come. That being so, it would be nothing short of a scandal if Scottish Members consented to such a Bill being thrown at their heads without giving it full discussion.

The main point of the Bill was the question of the area, and upon that there was a considerable amount of controversy. Many people held that the parish was the best area, believing that in the parish alone could there be the closest touch between the people and the management of education. On the other hand, many believed that the county was the best area. In this dilemma the Government had had to make a compromise, and they had taken the district. He did not say that that was necessarily the best. As the Bill was introduced it had all the evils of a compromise. If they stuck rigidly to the district it would have many of the faults of both the parish and the county with none of their virtues. What they demanded was elasticity, and that had been provided for, and to that extent the Bill was better. He thought, however, that there was room for more elasticity. In Committee last year this matter was discussed, and it was felt that whatever scheme was adopted it would be found necessary to have a wider area for secondary than for elementary education. A proposal of that kind could be embodied without injuring the Bill. The late Lord-Advocate promised to embody a clause giving effect to some arrangement of that sort, and he hoped that in Committee the Government would consider some scheme whereby districts could unite for secondary education, whilst retaining the authority for elementary education. One of the changes proposed in the Bill was exceedingly complicated. A distinction was made between primary and secondary schools, and in order to accomplish this no less than three different areas had been taken—in some cases the parish, in others a group of parishes, and in some the district. Only one-quarter of the districts had secondary schools, and the remaining three-quarters had higher-grade schools which served large districts. The simplest way was to make an arrangement that would make no difference between those schools. He welcomed the Bill, and hoped it would be passed. He had no fear but that the Lord-Advocate would do his best, for he had won golden opinions for his courtesy, and if the Government gave him facilities he had no doubt that he would make them a good Bill.

*Sir LEWIS McIVER (Edinburgh, W.) said the subject of the financial proposals of the Bill had been so well covered by the hon. Member for South Edinburgh that it was unnecessary for him to do more than join in the appeal which had been made, urging upon the Government the importance of giving due weight to the strong feeling which existed amongst local authorities as to the proposed diversion of the equivalent grant from its present purposes. The ground on which objection was taken to this diversion was that money was given to England and Scotland for practically the same purposes, and it was now proposed to take it away from such purposes in Scotland. The proposed arrangement was in no way essential to the principal purposes of the Bill, and if the money was to be raised it could be most properly raised by an education rate. This was a question which was considerably discussed last year. Owing to the system of rating in Scotland, a certain differentiation between owners and occupiers existed, which had no parallel in England. Under this Bill the money which had hitherto been applied to the relief of occupiers' rates would be replaced by a rate which would fall equally upon the owner and occupier. And the present proposal would, therefore, interfere with incidence of taxation as deliberately accepted by the Scottish burghs, quite apart from the resentment felt by them on the subject of the equivalent grant. He did not think the Government would be wise if they assumed that the burghs acquiesced in the absorption of the residue grant. The whole of this movement had seriously alarmed the burgh authorities, because they did not know where this sort of thing was going to stop. They were not satisfied at the present time with other grants, and consequently they were unwilling to surrender what they had already got, in exchange for something about which they, at the present time, had no information. When the Lord-Advocate summed up he hoped that he would recognise the very strong feeling which existed on this matter throughout the burghs and in some of the counties to the effect that this differentiation of treatment was unjust to Scotland, and was unnecessary for the purposes of education.

Mr. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs) said he should like the House to be informed how the details of this Bill were going to be considered. Many speakers had stated that they were not concerned with details at the present moment, but there was a rumour that this Bill was to be sent to the Committee on Trade or something of that kind. He hoped that was not true. If this Bill was not to be considered by the whole of the Scottish Members in Committee, then a much closer attention to details would be required on the Second Reading and on the Report stage. He was not a keen opponent of this Bill, for it had his support last year, but he maintained that every Scottish Member was bound to assist in the moulding of this measure, and it would be something approaching a scandal if this Bill was sent to a Committee which would prevent fifty of the Scottish Members having a voice in regard to its details. There was a view very widely held that Bills relating to Scotland could not be taken up unless Scotland was unanimous and the Scottish Members were mum, and unless they could be passed without discussion. He thought it would be wrong, however good this measure was, if it was not subject to the fullest discussion by the whole of the Scottish Members, who ought to have some opportunity of assisting in moulding it.

There were one or two other points he wished to refer to. So far as the Bill itself was concerned he had very little to say against it, just as he had not much to say against the Bill of last year. There were some questions which were certainly controversial. In regard to the question of finance some of the burghs held strong opinions. Then there was the question of the areas, and although the discussion up to the present had gone somewhat in favour of the areas prescribed under the Bill, many opinions were held in a contrary direction. There was a controversial question affecting the enumerated districts, and he knew that in Committee upon the Bill the school board of the burgh of Leith would insist upon representations being made upon the point of its amalgamation with Edinburgh. Those were fair subjects for full discussion. The Government owed it to the House and to Scotland to use every effort in their power to pass the Bill this year. This was all the more urgent because the Second Reading had been put off until May 8th and because the Bill was many years overdue. There was no particular reason why it should not have been passed last year. He thought his hon. friend the Member for West Renfrew was the most obvious cause of the Bill of last year not passing by moving his rating Amendment.

*Sir CHARLES RENSHAW (Renfrew, W.) said he did not move the rating Amendment and he had always been opposed to it.

Mr. MUNRO FERGUSON said he understood that the views of the hon. Member opposite were adopted by the Government. There was really no reason why the Bill of last year should not have been passed, and it was a great disappointment to every educationist in Scotland, because without some co-ordination of education much effort was lost, and they had fallen very much in arrears of the true position which Scotland ought to hold in this matter. Consequently, there was a feeling of insecurity as regarded the present Bill, and there had been gloomy forebodings on the part of competent persons as to the chances of the Bill passing through during the present session. A Bill conceived upon broad national lines was worthy of a national effort.

He was glad that the Government had held to the main lines of the Bill of last year. His main objection to the Bill was in regard to the excessive autocracy of the Department. The power of the secretary of the Department was practically uncontrolled. He thought the tendency of the Bill was to gather power into one hand. Too many Scottish boards were cumbrous and in very much the same condition as they had been since the days of the Stuarts, and this was a good time to make a change. There had been a change in the headship of the Department. Although they did not all agree with Sir Henry Craik they recognised his capacity, and they recognised the great services he had performed for Scotland. As to the personal element, Sir Henry was a man that nobody could help liking. The Bill should certainly have created a National Council of Education for Scotland. That would have involved, of course, the transfer of the Education Department to Edinburgh. The hon. Baronet the Member for West Edinburgh, in discussing the question of districts, said that it was much easier to divide one body into two or three than to get two or three to agree. If that argument was true he would ask the hon. Baronet to apply it to the provincial councils, and to build up a national council out of them. The provincial councils were, he believed, a valuable feature of the Bill. He should like to see a fifth provincial council. He thought the Highlands naturally lent themselves to be treated separately. There should be a fifth council at Inverness, or the council of St. Andrews might go to Inverness. He was not indifferent to the advantage of Fife as a centre, but at the same time he thought the Highland area could never be properly organised from Aberdeen. He desired to express his satisfaction that powers were to be given to combine the provincial councils for certain purposes. He thought they should have much wider powers, and that real powers should be given to them.

So far as the present Bill went it was an improvement on that of last year, and he thought it would be valuable. Did the hon. Member opposite propose to abolish the School Board of Edinburgh? If he proposed to give the control of educational affairs to the Town Council of Edinburgh he would be setting up a dual system of control. He thought that would be a serious danger of the proposal which should be cleared away before the change was made. Was it better to have educational bodies all over Scotland, or to use the local bodies all over Scotland? He did not think a dual system would be an advantage. There was a good deal to be said for the parish councils. The main argument for them—and there was something in it—was that there was a feeling that a parish board was an easy body to attend—that a working man after his tea could attend a parish board. He believed that if travelling expenses were paid they would get a larger proportion to attend the district boards. He thought a provision should be added to the Bill that the travelling expenses of the members of school boards should be paid in order that the working class should have no obstacle to their full representation upon them. The district area, he believed, offered the possibility of giving the best authority. It was very convenient for working purposes. Most of the work of the county councils had passed now into the hands of the district committees of the councils. He believed the area was a good one, that it would work economically, and enable them to have co-ordination of education, because they would never be able to have co-ordination unless there was opportunity for education to be controlled by the same authority. They could do that with a district authority, but they could not do it with a parish authority. The hon. Member for Kincardineshire referred to the possibility of greater elasticity in the arrangements. He himself was in favour of the greatest elasticity possible. One of the great advantages of the district system was that two or more districts which required a similar kind of higher and technical education could have it better under a district system than under a county system. There were many counties which did not require the same kind of higher and technical education over the whole area, whereas by grouping the districts one would be able to arrange the educational system much better.

As to the physical training and the feeding of school children, he believed that with such areas the difficulties could be met and grappled with. The small boards had not undertaken the work of providing for the requirements of physical training nearly enough. As to feeding, he believed that was in Scotland really a very simple matter. It had been tried, and wherever tried, so far as he knew, it had been a success. What was required was a kitchen, and a committee to see that the children were fed, and to obtain in some cases voluntary contributions for the feeding of children whose parents could not afford to pay for the food. In some cases he knew that the children were fed at very small expense. The parents paid for the tickets. The fault was not so much in the system under which the children were being fed as in the fact that the system itself had only been partially developed. There were some parts that had never attempted it, and he thought that had been the fault of the Scotch Education Department. By the very nature of its constitution it had no power of initiative to take up questions of that kind. That was pre-eminently the kind of question that would come before the new councils if the power of initiative were given to them. There should be in every parish or district a committee appointed, probably by the school board, to see that the children were properly fed. This Bill should give the school authorities powers to make the necessary equipment for the cooking of dinners. He gave notice of an Amendment of that kind to the Bill of last year. The great trouble which had been experienced had been in getting the school kitchen itself, the boards having no power to make one or to provide the necessary accommodation. With a little initiative by the Department, and a slight amendment of the Bill, there was no child in Scotland who need not be thoroughly well fed. He congratulated the Government on having seized this great opportunity of providing for the training of teachers. He trusted they would seize with equal vigour the opportunity of passing the Bill, because the passing of it would be almost a justification for the prolongation of the present Parliament.

Sir MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbrightshire) said he wished to follow the example of his hon. friend the Member for the Leith Burghs in congratulating the Government on bringing forward of this measure. In regard to the feeding of children, he thought there should be no difficulty whatever. He had had some experience in connection with the establishment of soup kitchens. In only one case the board had to ask assistance to build a soup kitchen. A small house with a galvanised iron roof was provided at a cost of £15 or £20. In other cases the needful appliances for cooking were provided in places adjoining the schoolhouses, and the board considered that they were justified in applying the rates to that purpose. In regard to provisions there had never been any difficulty. A concert once a year in winter was generally sufficient to provide the funds. The farmers had been very kind in providing vegetables, and small payments were made by the children for the meals supplied. The board thought it was better to take a small payment for a basin of soup than to give it voluntarily, but every consideration was given in the cases of children whose parents could not afford to pay even a halfpenny. Tickets were sold in lots on a more liberal scale if considered necessary. He agreed that it might be advisable to introduce words in Section 7 of the 23rd Clause of the Bill which would permit schools boards to incur the very trifling expense of providing for the feeding of children in necessary cases. He would not discuss the question of rating at length at the present moment. He could only tell the Government that it would be a great disappointment if part of the equivalent grant were taken from them. It would entail in many districts from 1d. to 1½d. in the £ of additional taxation. In Scotland they had a good system of education, but he believed that by this Bill they would get a better system. If only the area was enlarged they would be able to deal with a freer hand with secondary education. He concurred with the remark of the hon. Member for Kincardineshire that they could not have secondary education to any real extent without a large area—except, perhaps, in very thickly populated districts; and he hoped that the Lord-Advocate would take that into consideration. He was at one with the hon. Member for Leith in hoping that the Bill would be thoroughly discussed in the House instead of being sent to a Grand Committee. It would be a great saving of time, for the Bill could be got through Committee in half the time a Grand Committee would occupy. He did not imagine that there would be any obstruction, but many details had to be considered.

Mr. MUNRO FERGUSON said he was strongly in favour of the Bill being considered in Committee of the Whole House, and especially that it should not be sent to the Grand Committee on Law or Trade. But he had always thought that a Scotch Bill should be sent to a Grand Committee consisting of all the Scotch Members.

SIR MARK STEWART said he was quite certain that that would never be attained.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON said he himself had made the proposal of a Grand Committee with all the Scotch Members and other Members in addition.

SIR MARK STEWART said he did not think it was ever carried.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON: Oh, yes; it was done once.

SIR MARK STEWART: Well, it could not have been often done. A Scotch Education Bill might interest some English Members and even some Welsh Members; and he therefore hoped it would be discussed in Committee of the Whole House. He was sure that a much better Bill would be produced than if it was considered in Grand Committee. He trusted the Lord-Advocate would use all his efforts with the Government to begin upon the Committee stage as soon as possible, so that it might be finished and the Bill read a third time before Whitsuntide.

MR. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire) said he was anxious to see the discussion kept as close as possible to the actual proposals in the Bill. There was one thing he was very glad of, namely, that the hon. Baronet who had just sat down had endorsed very strongly the appeal made by his hon. friend the Member for Leith to the Government to afford the House some light as to what they were going to do with the Bill in Committee. Speaking for himself, he thought it would be a great misfortune to send it to an ordinary Committee; let it be discussed in Committee of the Whole House. There was a special reason for that. This Bill contained a collection of Second Reading questions. It touched questions of principle affecting not only Scotland as a whole, but numerous districts of the country—questions of rating, of Highland areas, of policy in regard to secondary education, of existing institutions, of denominational education, and of the whole subject of large and small areas in regard to general education. He contended that a Bill of that kind was no Bill to be sent to a Grand Committee, but should be kept in the House where all the Scotch Members, with the assistance of English Members who were interested in the general question of education, might deal with it. He hoped that the Lord-Advocate would get authority from the Prime Minister to allay the misgiving that they almost all felt that it would be a mistake to send this Bill to a place where it could not be properly dealt with.

He came to the point dealt with by the two hon. Members who represented West and South Edinburgh. He had the greatest possible respect for both of those hon. Members, but he found himself in intense dissent both from the substance and the manner of their action. The hon. Baronet the Member for South Edinburgh in his discussion of the county as the alternative area and the rating question concerned, seemed to have lost sight of the fact that in Scotland the improvement of the national system of education was a matter which had sunk deep into the mind of the people, and that the last thing required was that the education rate should be made by farmers and factors. He had the greatest respect for the county councils and he should be glad to see a simplification of the election and a unification of the education authority, and that they might be able to do in Scotland as in England. But in England, in the first place, there was no alternative if they wanted a large area; and, in the second place, there had been a certain development of interest on the part of some of the county councils—mainly shown in regard to technical education, which was not shown at present in such a marked degree in Scotland. He was not talking of Lanarkshire, where a remarkable interest was taken in technical education, but of some other counties which he knew. It must be taken into account, in discussing the educational standard for Scotland, that it would be a sheer misfortune if they turned over the handling of the subject of education to the county councils as they were constituted at the present time. In Wales there was a much keener interest in educational work than in England—in education for itself, and not merely for denominational controversies. The result was that there had grown up a class of experts in each locality, providing a sufficient number of people from whom they could get a sufficiently strong education board to deal with large areas. Therefore, he wanted to see in Scotland educational experts, honourably representing educational opinion, who would handle the whole system of education. He would consequently deplore if the suggestion of the hon. Member for South Edinburgh were adopted.

He came to the other alternative—the question of small areas. He could understand how people in Scotland would part with reluctance from the area of the parish, which had worked so well under the existing Education Act. But they had reached a stage when education had assumed a larger scope than in past times. Many people forgot the changes that had taken place in regard to the scope of education, the larger duties that were imposed on the teachers, and the larger knowledge expected from those who guided them. Therefore, larger areas were required than the parish. He knew parishes where they had a much higher standard of ideas in regard to education than in others, and where the parish school board was very efficient. But he also knew others where the present educational system was being scandalously handled. What was wanted was something short of the area of the county, and something greater than the parish, where there could be got a larger scope, a larger basis, and a larger mind. The Government had adopted a compromise which might not be an ideal one. They had divided the county into local government districts and given large powers of grouping and splitting up the counties for the purpose of making the necessary education districts. That might or might not be the only way of doing what he thought would allay the public apprehension on one point. He meant how those who were elected were to get to the place where the new central body was to sit. He did not see why the travelling expenses of the persons to sit on those bodies—if the choice of the best men were to be encouraged—should not be paid. He was sure it could be done without any chance of jobbing. It was a difficulty which would have to be dealt with.

The next feature of the Bill was the way it sought to organise secondary education in Scotland. That was in a highly chaotic condition, and would have to be handled in a thorough-going fashion if a good secondary educational system was to be obtained. They must handle primary and secondary education as one system; if they did not, both would suffer. The separation had been very bad for the teaching profession in Scotland. Under the old system the teaching profession achieved wonderful results, but when the teachers were confined to elementary education they often found themselves at the mercy of men, as managers, who were not so well educated as themselves. He knew that there were some who said that the teachers had taken too large a part in this discussion of policy, but he did not think so. He did not of course want to put the matter or the preponderating influence in regard to it into the hands of the teachers, but he thought they should have something to say in the matter. It was to the teacher they had to look for the efficiency and education of the country, and there was nothing more striking than the increasing difficulty of getting good teachers for the schools. The profession was not as popular as it had formerly been, and he put that down to the fact that the *status* of the teachers had not been satisfactory. If this Bill promoted one thing more than another it promoted an improved *status* for the teachers and the breaking down of that hard-and-fast line which had shut off the elementary teacher from the rest of his profession. He trusted that one good result of this Bill might be that the difficulty in regard to the supply of teachers, which had been getting more and more formidable from year to year, would show signs of diminution.

Another point of an important kind in connection with this Bill was that with regard to provincial councils. Strongly in favour as he was of these councils, there was one thing in this Bill as compared with last year's Bill in which this Bill had gone back. In one of the clauses of last year's Bill one of the provincial councils was to meet at Inverness to deal with the Highland districts. This year the proposed council at Inverness had been struck out, and there was no representation, therefore, for the Highlands. He was satisfied that the organisation of education in the Highlands had features of its own which required to be dealt with in common, and could not be dealt with unless they had some kind of body representative of Highland educational opinion. Whether it would be the best course for the Government to add a fifth provincial council, not connected with the Universities but sitting in Inverness, and looking after those things which peculiarly affected the Highlands and which had to be considered as a whole, he did not know, but he did not think the Bill would be satisfactory unless some clause was put in for dealing with the case of the Highland counties. For the rest he could not dissociate in his mind the four provincial centres from something which was only just mentioned but which had been the subject of a Departmental Minute—he meant the training of teachers. He hoped that the Bill marked—and it depended upon the Department whether it did or did not mark—a new departure in the training of teachers in Scotland. They had outgrown the stage when they could leave this to denominations. The time had come when the training of teachers should be a national business in form as it was in substance, rather than be left to the tender mercies of the Church, which, Heaven knew, had enough to do of its own without taking this question over. If a beginning was being made with the national training of teachers then he thought that for that alone the Bill would be worth passing. He was not sure that the Government would not have to stiffen up the powers of the provincial councils if they were to be effective, and he should like to see a clearer definition of the representation of the school boards on those councils. He was not at all sure that they ought not to be in a majority, and the Government would find it desirable to have something like a second storey to their building—a building in which they would have the picked representatives of the school boards meeting together and shaping educational policy with expert advisers. In the discretion of the Department, some were to be picked representatives of the school boards and some of the Universities, and they were to meet together and give advice which might or might not be followed. If, however, the Government took the other way they would get a more living force in the upper storey of their building and their building would possess an importance which it would not if they left these provincial councils constituted as they were. Nevertheless one was glad to see the provincial councils recognised, and it was of great importance to the scheme that that element should be recognised.

Something had been said about denominational teaching in Scotland, but he was glad to say that very little had been said about it. They did not want that system of teaching. He was far from saying that their system was perfect, and he agreed that the business of the State would never be satisfactorily done, as far as the State was concerned, until they confined the intervention of the State to secular teaching, giving the opportunity to those outside—Churches and parents—to provide the rest, and encouraging it in every way; letting national schools do something in the nature of teaching of that kind but not charging masses of electors, who were perfectly unfit to deal with matters of this kind, with that duty. In Scotland they had not taken the latter course. There had grown up with them an interlacing of two tendencies. The first was to start with the recognition of the State in regard to the teaching and the second an equally resolute feeling on the part of the people that there should be no nonsense about the action of the State. The consequence was that they were wholly free from the kind of thing which gave such trouble in the South. On the whole he thought the Government had done rightly to leave the *status quo* alone and not to attempt to idealise it. In the main he was content with the Bill as it stood; it was the best way of getting out of a difficult situation, and he thought right would be done. But, as he said before, the very enumeration of the topics to be dealt with, the very difficulties which had been emphasised, necessitated the taking of the Committee stage of the Bill in the House. They could not deal with matters of that kind in a Committee upstairs. If it were sent to a Committee upstairs all they would get would be a paltry and inadequate treatment of this Bill taken as a whole. Of all the Bills which he remembered in the House, he hardly remembered one which was less fitted to be sent to a Grand Committee, and he was sure that the Lord-Advocate would convey to the Prime Minister the obvious sense of the House that the Bill could only be adequately dealt with elsewhere than in a Grand Committee upstairs.

SIR J. STIRLING - MAXWELL (Glasgow, College) said that while he agreed with the Bill as a whole there was one important point in it which seemed to him so faulty, and which so gravely attacked the interests of those he represented in that House, that he felt bound to call attention to it at the first possible moment. It was the plan for collaring part of the equivalent grant to which allusion had already been made. It was perfectly true that it would be inappropriate to remove this money from its present purposes if there was any meaning in the word "equivalent." It must also be remembered that this money had been devoted to its present purposes by a solemn Act of Parliament, and it seemed to him that, reading the Act of 1892 fairly, the rating authority and the ratepayers had every right to build upon this income as one upon which they could depend. For that reason he thought it would be a great mistake to modify it. Then there was the question of the incidence of taxation in the cities of Scotland, which made it impossible to say that this was merely a question of robbing Peter to pay Paul, because the money would not be raised out of the same pockets. As those who would have to make up the deficiency if the money was taken were different in Glasgow, though it might not affect Edinburgh so much, the withdrawal of the money from its present purpose would be a very serious inconvenience. The amount which Glasgow would lose under the proposals of the Bill would amount to as much as £11,000. That was to say, that if this money was taken off the resources for police purposes last year the rate would have to be raised. He very much objected to the rating authorities in Glasgow being in a position to claim that they must raise their rate on account of their resources having been docked by the Government. If there was to be an increase of that rate, he would rather that the increase should be judged upon its own merits. On these grounds he hoped the Government would earnestly reconsider this matter. With that exception the Bill seemed to be a good one, and he hoped it would pass into law.

MR. THOMAS SHAW (Hawick Burghs) said he had listened to the debate with great interest. There were, however, one or two points of detail which he hoped he might be excused from referring. In the first place, he desired to say with regard to the matter which was so well raised by his hon. friend the Member for Barnard Castle, that he was entirely in sympathy with the proposal made. He thought a reform in the direction which he indicated, and which had been advocated on both sides of the House so forcibly that evening, could be very fitly dovetailed into one of the sections of the present Bill. His right hon. friend opposite, the Member for the University of Cambridge, indicated two points in the Bill which, standing as they did, would leave the Bill in a grotesque situation. The Bill provided for powers being given to the board to attend to the physical training of the children and the same sub-section also provided for the medical inspection of the children. Supposing the latter power were exercised by the board and it was found upon examination that a not inconsiderable portion of the children were medically unfit to attend school? To subject those children to the ordinary processes of physical training would be absurd. That was a matter which the board under the present Bill had no power to deal with. That would be an absurd situation, and he put it to the Lord-Advocate that all that was required could be accomplished by embodying something in the direction of the recommendations of the English Committee on this subject. That seemed a small matter, but he held that it was a matter which went to the foundations of a large portion of the education of the country. He hoped that whether in this House or in Committee the Scottish Members would stand together and insist that the Government should make an addendum to the effect that the children found unfit through malnutrition or insufficient feeding should be attended to in the interest of the State, and that the State should not attempt to give mental training to children unless there was that physical substratum which would render it effective.

That was one point of detail; the other was what was to be the fate of this Bill in the future? Were they going to a Committee on Trade with it? That would be absurd; still, it had been mentioned. Were they going with it to a Committee on Law? That also would be absurd; still again, it had been mentioned. In the measure there were a good many Second Reading questions, and he might add that in addition to those questions there were others affecting individual localities in Scotland, which had separate interests and were separately represented in the House. Therefore, to exclude the representatives of those districts by some arrangement from the Grand Committee in which they could not appear would simply be not to facilitate the passing of the measure but to provoke the House, on the consideration of the Report, to inquire into the whole of the proceedings in Committee and prolong the opposition to the measure.

The third matter of detail had reference to the provincial councils. He told the House frankly that he was not in favour of these councils. It seemed to him that they were very shadowy, unsubstantial, not representative, and merely advisory bodies. He supposed when they came into existence they would have a philosophical air; they would give philosophical advice, and here and there, when it pleased the Department, that philosophical advice would be attended to. On the whole, he thought very little of them as they were at present constituted. How were they to improve them? He agreed with his right hon. friend behind him that they must add to their number. There were two particular reasons why the Highlands of Scotland should have a separate provincial council if such bodies should be brought into existence. Only a provincial council sitting at Inverness would be able to overhaul the variety of arrangements which at present existed in the Highlands, and in the next place the Highlands were the recipients under the Department of special sums, and these special sums required not a little anxiety and care in the handling and in the investigations as to the needs of the districts and the funds necessary to meet those needs. He thought that with regard to the exclusion of Inverness, which was included last year, they should have some explanation.

As to the main part of the Bill, he supposed they were all grateful for it in a kind of way. They were grateful for it, but he suspected their gratitude was not alone for benefits received by the Bill, but rather on account of the mischiefs which the Bill had avoided. They had maintained the *ad hoc* principle in the Bill, and that was a tremendous gain. It was the gain of a thing which was contemplated as out of the question by the Prime Minister in former years, and the right hon. Gentleman had denounced the *ad hoc* principle in unmeasured terms and apparently in terms of universal application. As to the Bill itself, for the purposes of a Second Reading he must confess to the House very plainly that he had grave doubts on some points. Enlargement of the area was no doubt a very good thing for some purposes, but for some alone. For secondary education the enlargement of the area was a good thing, because it would encourage combination, with the result that at the top of the superstructure of the parochial arrangement there would be an arrangement for secondary education.

Further than that, he had the greatest doubt as to the extinction of the present school boards in Scotland. He thought the House failed to recognise what the school boards of Scotland had done in the history of the country. The school boards had not only educated the people in regard to primary education very well, but they had produced bodies which were familiar with the complexity of the Minutes issued by the Scottish Education Department which required an education in itself. They had had in Scotland for a generation the training of local authorities going on in this matter, and now at one stroke they were to lose 95 per cent. of all that educational product, and county districts were to be created and turned into areas for educational purposes. Where there was a geographical definition of an area he could understand the necessity of the proposal, but where there were enormous areas like the county of Sutherlandshire, and if the Secretary for Scotland on the top of that was going to have power to add that county to some other county, he could not see the necessity for it. On both sides of the House Scottish Members were the last to deny the value of education, but its effectiveness consisted in the close intimacy which there was between the parent and those who represented the parent on the one hand, and those who controlled the education of the child on the other. In the districts which the Government were setting up there would be a great absence of that element which had been the secret of educational success. He knew the teaching profession did not very much care about these small boards, and he did not think much of them. He thought there should be the power to combine them where they were too small, and that the power to combine them should be a compulsory one at the instance of the Education Department, but the theory of fixing anything hard and fast by way of a county area or district area in Scotland was out of the question, because both the county and the districts were areas formed totally irrespective of the modern requirements of education. What was wanted was selected centres, which would be centres of secondary educational life, and it might be that from those centres linking up all the burghs in the area, and having regard to railway and steamer facilities, an effective unit could be made in view of the requirements of education and transport. He had these doubts with regard to the disappearance of the old school boards, and felt that he had preached in the wilderness upon this subject in former years.

He noticed, however, that counties and burghs in Scotland were beginning to take this matter in hand. He had before him the report of a conference of the school boards of Forfarshire which was held the other day. It was a very important body and contained representatives of thirty school boards. He found that they had taken the view which he had ventured to express more than once in that House, and they even went the length of suggesting that the Bill should not be read a second time unless provision was made for its alteration to the effect that for the purpose of elementary education the existing school board districts should not be disturbed. They then said—

> "That there should be a board in each of these districts with powers equal—so far as elementary education is concerned—to those vested in the present school boards."

And that the district boards should be composed of representatives or delegates appointed by burgh and parish school boards. The idea of a compromise was mooted, it being felt that if the areas were made too large, the contact of the parents would be so far removed that education in Scotland would be damaged and not improved. It was not in Forfarshire alone that those views were spreading. The same ideas were taking root in the county of Perth. The observations of Dr. Henderson, the chairman at a recent meeting of the school board of the parish of Crieff, were well worthy of attention. He stated—

> "A still more serious objection is that by the scheme proposed in the Bill the parents of children attending the elementary schools throughout a district will not be represented on the board."

That was emphatically the case, and Scottish Members should take notice of the fact that the people would to a large extent be educationally disfranchised unless care was taken that the areas were not made too large, and means provided by which it was made possible for men of humble means to sit on those boards. Dr. Henderson further stated—

> "Each meeting (of such a board) will mean a whole day's work. The time and travelling involved in attending such meetings can be afforded only by the leisured classes, and, of these, by only the least occupied."

That was the system it was proposed to substitute for the one now in existence, but he thought the present system was much the better one. If it meant educational disfranchisement of a large body of the artisan population of Scotland, so far as their own children were concerned, the Government would not do much of a national service by the Bill. One other observation made at the Crieff meeting was well worth being remembered—

> "The whole drift of legislation embodied in the Bill is to take the elementary education out of the hands of the parents of the children and lodge it in central boards, which can only be constituted of members of the leisured classes."

That was his fear, and the two protections against it were the constitution of the management committee and the provision for the payment of the expenses of the attending member. He hoped that on that point there would be no wavering on either side. Steps must be taken to ensure that in the matter of the education of their own children the population had the right to send whom they would to those boards, the area of choice being sufficiently widened for that purpose.

The Bill proposed to saddle the Department with very heavy responsibilities. Seeing that the fiat of the Department could not be easily revised in the House, he hardly envied the Department and the Secretary for Scotland their task of giving form and effect to many of the provisions in the Bill. The Department was empowered either to combine or to split up counties or districts, and in so far as that bureaucratic power was not exercised in the direction of bringing the people of the locality in direct relation with the education of their limited area, to that extent the action of the Department would fail. He had no reason to doubt that the staff at Dover House would use their educational powers wisely and well, but it was right to call attention to the delegation by the House of such large and important powers to a Department of the State. He wished also to refer to the enormous power of the Department in regard to the distribution of grants. The Department was really in a position to dictate here, there, and almost everywhere, and was able to interfere in the question of school fees. He totally dissented from the provision in the Bill for splitting up areas by assessing particular small parishes for old and new capital expenditure, and thus differentiating these small parishes—some of which might have small valuations but large populations—and making their lot and burden heavier than that of the rest of the district with which they were educationally associated. It would be far better to adopt the scheme suggested by the hon. Member for Kincardineshire. In setting up a district composed of a combination of various parishes attention should be given to the unit of the district, the whole district being made equally responsible for all the capital expenditure. Many places, such as Biggar and Dunfermline, had hitherto heavily assessed themselves by providing schools which had been used far outside the particular parishes, and the Biggar School Board were of opinion that the better plan would be to pool all expenses for both provision and maintenance of schools within the new area, and they added—

> "The inclusion of this clause will continue a heavy and unfair burden of taxation on localities which have erected schools, providing higher education, not only for the pupils of their own district but for the pupils of other and outlying parishes. Existing school boards in county districts have found it necessary, and have been encouraged by county councils and secondary education committees, to erect such schools. With the exception in most cases of a little aid from county authorities, the burden has been borne entirely by the parish or burgh in which the school is situated. Now when the present Bill affords an opportunity of distributing this burden over the area which derives the benefit, Biggar Parish School Board finds, with regret, that the injustice will be continued and aggravated."

He was in favour of suggested Amendments in the direction of making the unit of the district such that in matters of finance there would be none of those calculations of the highest technical character, which were most confusing both to the authority and to the ratepayers, and would divide the financial interest of one portion of the parish from that of another, and keep up that division of responsibility which it ought to be the object of the Bill to cause to disappear.

Viewing as he did with sincere regret the disappearance of so many of those highly useful organisations—the parish school boards of Scotland—

he had thought it right to give his views in some detail. He detested the reference in the Bill to fees. Years ago the Government proposed a fee grant to wipe out the obligation to pay fees in all primary schools in Scotland. But there had grown up a system of charging fees quite antagonistic to the principle upon which the fee grant was founded, and now this Bill contained an extraordinary provision under which not only would the exaction of fees be permitted by implication in certain parishes, but higher fees would be charged to a person in, say, Roxburgh who sent his children to a school at Galashiels or Selkirk, instead of to a school which, although in his own county, was further away in the matter of railway accommodation, such as Jedburgh, or the like. Schools such as those at Galashiels could not be localised as belonging to a county or district, and to enact that people who went to the most convenient centre should be penalised by an extra fee was to introduce a system altogether antagonistic to the whole principle upon which Scottish education was conducted. The Bill had gone on the old lines. He respected it because it adhered to the *ad hoc* principle; it left school boards of some kind, but he wished there had been a little more idea of advancement in it, and that it had declared solidly for the reform which was bound to come—he hoped it would come in their time—when there would be no fees of any kind charged for secondary or technical education in Scotland. He held that the system of attempting to balance the Imperial grants by charging parents fees for the education of their most promising children in the higher departments of education must come to an end. Until it did they would never be right in Scotland. They had free primary and free University education; why should this condition apply to the middle stage? This matter would have to be dealt with strongly and firmly, and he was convinced that the whole feeling of Scotland would be in favour of reform.

MR. PARKER SMITH (Lanarkshire, Partick) said there was nothing like attacking any institution to have all its merits brought out both by hon. Gentlemen opposite and hon. Members on the Ministerial side. He had a great deal of sympathy with the old parish school boards and he was sorry to hear that they had to go, but if they intended to consider education as a whole, the necessity of having larger areas and a more consolidated system entirely overwhelmed any regard which he felt for the institutions which were now going to cease to exist. In regard to areas he sympathised a great deal with what his hon. friend who had just sat down had said about the necessity of not going upon any hard-and-fast line for all parts of Scotland. There were very considerable powers in this Bill for varying the areas according to local requirements, and he thought those powers ought to be made as wide as possible. The reasons for making educational divisions were very different to the reasons for divisions for local government purposes.

There was another point which his hon. friend thought was only a detail, but to him it seemed to be a very large point in this discussion—he alluded to the question of the undertaking by the education authorities of the feeding of children who were underfed. That was a subject upon which they all felt the greatest sympathy. He thought, however, that there were much larger difficulties in the way than those which had been put forward. He knew that those difficulties were felt very strongly by the great educational authorities of Scotland. He had received a telegram from the chairman of the Edinburgh School Board objecting very strongly to this proposal. There were other great school boards which had by no means made up their minds that the feeding of the children was a duty that it would be to the advantage of the community for them to adopt. Why was this considered to be an educational duty? The children who were destitute, like anybody else who was destitute, had a right to be fed and kept alive. That was a right which existed in Scotland just as much as in any other part of the country, and that right did not depend upon education. He thought that it was much more essential for the health of the child in after life that it should be properly fed before it was five years old than in the years which followed during school time.

This was a very large responsibility which they were seeking to put upon educational bodies. Hon. Members opposite had pointed to clauses in the Bill dealing with medical supervision and with crippled and epileptic children, and they had asked why should they not also have the power to feed the children. This question, to him, seemed to stand upon a very different footing. They did not adopt the democratic principle of spending an equal amount of money upon every child, but the principle they adopted was to spend upon the education and training of each child what its special and individual circumstances required. Where they had children in need of special medical supervision, where their eyes stood in need of special attention, and where the children required surgical appliances, then it was more and more the tendency of all advanced school boards to give special attention to those children. He thought, however, that they were going a very long step when they undertook not merely to give this special care, but also to undertake the feeding of the average ordinary child who was in no different position to hundreds and thousands of other children.

The hon. Member for Leith mentioned a practical way of dealing with this question in the course of his speech, and he showed that, without the danger of putting this duty on the school board, an enormous deal could be done and was being done by a very small expenditure of money, accompanied by a good deal of voluntary effort and discretion. For years he had been trying to preach that the physical development of children was infinitely more important for their future well-being than the amount of knowledge they could put into their minds during the time they were at school. He welcomed the advance made in this Bill in regard to the powers that were to be given to school boards. He thought there were various points upon which those powers could be still further developed. More powers were required in regard to dealing with cripples and defective children. The power of allowing medical inspection and giving glasses to the children with defective sight, where this was necessary, was a power which, in many cases, could be used by the education authorities without the dangers which would be involved if school boards at their own expense, or at the expense of the poor rate, commenced to supply food to ordinary children every day of their lives. With all sympathy with the spirit in which this proposal had been made, he thought a great deal more consideration ought to be given to it before any wide proposals dealing with this subject could be pressed upon the country with any hope of that general acceptance which was necessary for its success.

He was very glad to be able to testify to the amount of work which had been done in this direction in some great centres such as Glasgow and Govan. He would not put any details before the House, but the investigations which had been made strongly confirmed him as to the great importance of the efficient medical superintendence of the children and the excellent results which had followed. The mere fact of pointing out to parents what their children needed was a great advantage. Hon. Members had asked what was the use of such a medical examination. He wished to point out that in a very large number of cases parents had never known of those defects until the child had been examined at school, and until it had been pointed out to them that their children required glasses or other assistance, and that in many cases had been sufficient to induce the parents to provide them. These examinations had been carried out in the schools in Glasgow and Govan, and the result was that in the eye infirmary there were hundreds of children coming in to have their eyes seen to and who were being supplied with glasses.

Compared with the Bill of last year, a great advance had been made in this Bill in regard to the question of the training of teachers. Here he felt that they had one of the most central points of the whole problem of education. It was not the slightest use pouring out money and building gorgeous schools and keeping the children at them many years if they did not provide an adequate and efficient staff of teachers. In the past they had been in the habit of leaving the question of the teachers to itself, but he thought the present Bill went a long way to recognise the duty of the State in regard to this question. The Circular which was issued some time ago established committees in different parts of Scotland, and this worked admirably with the scheme of provincial councils, and he hoped the result would be the establishment of a satisfactory system of training teachers.

Then there was the question of the boundaries of some of the enumerated districts. He noticed that several of the largest school boards in Scotland were to be swallowed up under this Bill by other districts, and amongst them was the School Board of Leith. He thought Leith would have a great deal to say for itself upon this point. He would not press the case of Leith, because the place which more directly concerned him was the School Board of Govan, which it was proposed to make part of the district of Glasgow. The School Board of Govan was the largest in Scotland and embraced something over 200,000 of population. The two school boards of Glasgow and Govan worked side by side without any clashing and without injury to each other. The School Board of Govan included Partick and Govan. The burghs of Govan and Partick desired to stand separately, and they desired to do this upon educational grounds and not upon financial grounds. The argument was used last year that Govan wished to shirk its fair share of the burden, but that was not the case. The school rate of Glasgow was almost identical with that of Govan, and the produce per child of a penny in the £ was a good deal lower in Govan than in Glasgow. Therefore, it was not a question of the richer wishing to stand out from the duties of a great city. It was a question of local feeling and local independence to a great extent. It was a question that ought to be argued on educational grounds. They must decide whether it was best for the children that Glasgow and Govan should be under the control of one large board, or whether, by having separate boards, counterbalancing advantages could be obtained through the members having greater personal knowledge of the schools which would be for the benefit of the population concerned.

The hon. and learned Member for the Border Burghs had raised the question of rating power and the allocation of the debt. Very elaborate provisions were made in the 23rd Clause both in regard to the existing debt and the debt which would in future be incurred, so that the parishes which were concerned might get their fair share and not have too much. Those precautions might be necessary in county districts. They probably were necessary where town and county districts were both concerned, but there was one point to which consideration had hardly been given in the framing of the Bill and to which he asked the attention of the Lord-Advocate. The Bill had not sufficiently considered the circumstances of cities as distinguished from country districts. In regard to the question of the allocation of the debt the scheme of the Bill might be the fairest possible in the country districts which were composed of small towns and rural neighbourhoods. But did it apply in a great city? Take the case of Glasgow. It would be out of the question that there should be a dozen different rates in different parts of the city for education. In regard to every other question the city was a whole, and they did not consider whether the expenditure was more for the benefit of one portion of the city than another. They took the expenditure of the city as a whole. He would like to put it to the Lord-Advocate that in the framing of the clause sufficient consideration had not been given to the case of the cities. It ought to be limited to applying to the unenumerated districts, and the whole rate in the enumerated districts should be a single rate without any of the divisions which were stated in the Bill.

Another special point had been raised by several hon. Members, and that was in regard to the education fund. That fund he regarded as still something too large. Last year's Bill began by laying hold of all the funds and putting them in one big pool. After discussion last year, the Secretary for Scotland gave up £100,000 out of the equivalent grant. What remained now in the fund was the residue grant, and the balance of the equivalent grant, £69,000 of the one and

£63,000 of the other. In regard to the balance of the equivalent grant he thought the local authorities had the very strongest claims upon it. He hoped the Lord-Advocate would consider the matter, and that he might be willing to allow those claims, and to let the whole of the equivalent grant remain where it was. It was on an entirely different footing from the residue grant. The greater part of the residue grant already went to education, and he knew it would be accepted by many of the most important rating authorities that the residue grant ought to go altogether into the education fund, provided it was understood that the equivalent grant should be left standing as at present and the other sums also. A claim had been made that the £69,000 should also be taken from the fund. He could not see that there was any strength in that claim. The £69,000 was in the first place obtained for education, and he thought no proposal should be made to take it away from that purpose. Upon this point corporations did feel very strongly, and, it appeared to him, reasonably. He trusted the Government might be able to meet them in that matter. The Government were to be highly congratulated on the reception which had been given to this Bill. Last year's Bill got a very favourable reception, but nearly every speaker had pointed out directions in which the present measure was a considerable improvement on it. He hoped that in the discussion on the Bill they might not discover serious points of divergence.

Questions had been raised as to the body to which the Bill should go for discussion. He wished to see it sent to a Grand Committee. It seemed to him that it mattered extremely little which of the two Grand Committees it was sent to, for there were on both a fair representation of the Scotch Members. By the rules of the House, as hon. Members knew, it was competent in connection with any special Bill to add fifteen Members to a Grand Committee. Naturally in this case Scotch Members would be added, and it was perfectly possible by arrangement with a friend for anyone else to get himself put for the time on the Grand Committee in order that he might be present at the discussion of the Bill. He should have thought that hon. Members opposite would have felt more strongly than they seemed to do that there was a great advantage in having questions decided by those who had heard the discussion, instead of having Gentlemen coming in to vote as directed when the bell rang, although they had not heard the discussion. Of course the advantage of a Grand Committee in shortening procedure depended upon its decisions being fairly accepted by the House. It was perfectly useless to send a Bill upstairs if none of the decisions were to be accepted when it came down. Every hon. Member who had spoken had expressed a desire that the Bill should be passed into law. He should hope that if the Bill were sent to a Grand Committee the effect would be to winnow out a great number of the questions, leaving comparatively few to be settled when it came before the House on the Report stage. He entirely sympathised with the hope expressed by several hon. Members that the Bill, now that it had been brought forward for the second time, would be passed that session, and that great advantage might result to Scotch education.

*DR. MACNAMARA said he ought to apologise for intervening in the debate, but perhaps he might be allowed to regard himself as a Scotch Member *ad hoc*. He had been five years in the House, and, therefore, his capacity for amazement was long since exhausted. He must say that it was the Bill of last year, when he read it with care, which put the finishing touch to that exhaustion, because he considered it absolutely inconceivable that the persons who drafted and prepared that Bill were the same persons who drafted and prepared the English and Welsh Education Bill of 1902. The two things were in every respect and in all vital particulars the converse the one of the other. What did the present Bill do? This admirable Bill, for so he called it, set up ninety-four great school boards over all Scotland to administer in suitable areas public education of all grades, and commissioned on their own terms to give rate-aid to denominational schools.

Those were three first-class principles. Night after night when the Education Bill of 1902 was before the House he and his friends begged and implored the Government to put precisely the same principles into it, and when they were answered at all, which was not very often, they were rebuffed in the most uncompromising way. They asked for directly-elected *ad hoc* education authorities. They were scornfully refused. He was astonished that the Government had committed itself to the principle of an *ad hoc* authority for education in this Bill. He could not understand why it was that the Government had brought itself to agree that an *ad hoc* authority was the right one. The Government two years ago was hopelessly and entirely opposed to the *ad hoc* principle not only for England and Wales, but for all time and all places. He thought then, and he still thought, that the *ad hoc* principle was the right one, and here it was the central feature of this Bill. When it was put to the Prime Minister he replied—

> "I am clearly of opinion that it is a most retrograde policy to go in for this principle of *ad hoc* election to deal with particular subjects authoritatively, and with power to draw on the rates."

He asked his Scotch friends to contemplate that they were now being committed to a most retrograde policy in the setting up of the local education authorities. The late President of the Local Government Board, now the Irish Secretary, was equally precise. He said that, whether for good or evil, the Government had decided that it could no longer support the *ad hoc* principle, and here they were supporting it that day. The hon. Member confessed that got beyond him, and he gave it up. The Irish Secretary had said that the arguments against—

> "that principle do not rest only on the view that it is undesirable to add to the number of your elections, and add to the obligations of those who have to elect, but they rest on the more solid grounds that education is, and ought to form, one of the most important features of local government, and ought to form part of the duty of those who are entrusted with the general administration of the local affairs of their own area."

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education was equally decided as to the utter impropriety of direct election. He said—

> "I think that direct election does lead to some unfortunate characteristics in an educational body,"

He commended this to the Scotch Members—

> "The first of these is that if such a body is worth anything it is bound to be an extravagant body."

The hon. Gentleman's predecessor at the Board of Education was also specifically against direct election. He said—

> "The Government think that the *ad hoc* authority is an anachronism; they think that to propose to advert to an *ad hoc* authority is reactionary."

Here they were committing Scotland to a reactionary scheme! Then his right hon. friend, who was then speaking in behalf of the Government went on—

> "The only way you can have effective local self-government in this or any other country"

—even if Wales or Scotland wanted something different—

> "is for the local electors to choose somebody who shall have control of the whole finance and be responsible for all the expenditure of the ratepayers' money. If you have several bodies independent of each other exercising independent rating powers, how is it conceivable or possible that there can be efficient control of local finance, and therefore how can there be proper efficient local self-government?"

Now, he asked how those statements could be made compatible with this Bill? Here was a Bill which was to commit Scotland to what was an anachronism, a retrograde policy, and which was bound to be extravagant; and he asked himself: "Why did the Government in 1902–3 so ruthlessly destroy what they now set up as the ideal of local self-government?" He thought the explanation was perfectly simple. The Government thought that they could with impunity destroy the English and Welsh school boards. As regarded Wales they reckoned without their host, but they were right in counting upon the happy-go-lucky, indifferent temper of the English people. If they did not dare to touch the school boards of Scotland it was not because they loved them, but because they feared the zeal and activity which they knew the Scottish people would show on their behalf. He had something of contempt for some

Scotch Members who cheerfully destroyed the English school boards, and now took care that the Scotch bodies should not be touched.

The next striking contrast between the policy of to-day and that of two years ago was the power given in this Bill—he made no complaint whatever—to the school board over the denominational schools—

> "It shall be lawful for a school board, if they think fit . . . to incur expenditure, and to defray the same out of the school fund . . . in granting pecuniary or other aid upon such condition as they may from time to time prescribe to schools and institutions not under their charge, where such schools or institutions are recognised by the Department as supplying efficient education."

i.e., to denominational schools. They should do that if they thought fit; but the English education authorities were compelled, without any qualification except the discretion of the Board of Education, to give such assistance. He wished the right hon. Member for West Birmingham were there; he would ask the right hon. Gentleman to go in for his policy of equal rights to all white men in this matter.

The third acute difference was in the treatment of the religious question, which, however, he did not intend to raise. This Bill gave to this democratic authority, wholly elected—no co-opted members—elected *ad hoc*—power to frame the religious instruction with the prescriptions already in existence. The longer he contemplated the question the more he believed that the settlement proposed in this Bill was the only settlement, viz., to set up a democratic local authority—not half co-opted—and say to it "fight it out for yourselves and settle the form of religious instruction to be given in your locality." The Scotch were too shrewd to let that difficulty stand in the way of education. He confessed he should like to see it tried as an experiment in Wales to begin with, and then applied to England. This Bill happily provided the key to the problem of the religious difficulty in education.

Finally, he wished to call attention to Clause 26. He thought that clause was by far the most idealistic epitome of the whole duty of the State towards the working-class children that had ever come under his notice. What was the school board empowered to do? First of all the school board might provide any form of education or instruction out of the money at their disposal; provide for physical training and for medical inspection. He hoped before the Bill passed into law that it would meet the case of hungry children by making suitable provision for feeding them. They might provide the children with school books, writing materials, stationery, and other articles of a similar nature; they were to pay salaries to visiting teachers, or superintendents and organisers; they could grant pecuniary aid to schools not under their charge; they could establish bursaries with their money to send pupils of parts to schools of higher instruction and also to the Universities. For him to contemplate a school board in England being permitted to send children to the University would induce him, if he were musically disposed, to start a *nunc dimittis.* Then they were to make a special provision for the education, and. where required, for the conveyance to and from school, of epileptic or crippled children; to provide opportunities for education in outlying parts by means of conveyance, or paying travelling expenses for teachers and pupils, or defraying the cost of lodging pupils in convenient proximity to the school. And in addition to the Government scheme of superannuation they could out of the local fund grant additional retiring allowances to teachers. He congratulated the Government on having drafted this Bill. He understood that it was drafted at the same time as the Bill of 1902; and he could not understand the difference between the two.

There were two blots on the Bill, however. If a school board did not come to an agreement with the denominational manager regarding rate-aid, the latter could go to Dover House and obtain an additional subvention from the Scottish Fund over the head of the board. That might lead to financing wholly defective institutions. He thought such money should be paid through the school board, and that the board should have some power of interference in respect of the fabric of the school particularly, for all additional moneys, whether derived from local rates or the Scottish Fund. He also considered that the Bill gave too much power to the Scottish Education Department. He would like to see the powers of the Scottish Education Department materially circumscribed—the powers were here very greatly increased from what they were at the present time—even under such a very commanding man as Sir Henry Craik. On the whole, however, he regarded the Bill as an admirable one, and he wished it could be extended to England and Wales. When passed it would be a beacon light to the storm-tossed English educationalist. Eternal vigilance was the price of liberty; and the Scotch people had retained their school boards by their zeal and constant watching and had thus saved themselves and their country from a scheme of educational reaction.

*SIR WALTER THORBURN (Peebles and Selkirk) hoped now that the Bill had been launched it would be carried through with the greatest possible speed. The Bill was better than that of last year, because it did not contain the pooling arrangement. Reference had been made to Biggar. He was not surprised Biggar was in favour of the pooling arrangement because it had a very considerable debt which he would no doubt like to have shared by others. He knew a parish near Biggar which had little or no debt, and if pooling had been adopted that parish would have had to bear a portion of Biggar's debt. The same thing occurred in the county of Selkirk. The pooling arrangement would have been most unjust, because while the population of the two older burghs was 19,000, the population of the county was only 3,300. The debt in the burghs was very considerable, while in the county it was infinitesimal. The hon. Member for Barnard Castle dealt with a question of very great importance—the physical training and the feeding of children. He was quite in favour of some arrangement for the feeding of children who were not properly provided for otherwise, but what was done in that respect would have to be done cautiously so as not to pauperise the people. In his opinion some little charge should be made if food was supplied. In his own constituency he knew of a schoolmaster who gave children from a distance a cup of cocoa and a roll for a penny although it was bound to cost more. Well that kind of thing should be done by the board and not by individual teachers.

He was strongly in favour of the Committee stage of the Bill being taken in the House, as he believed it would shorten the proceedings and ensure the progress of the Bill. He felt a considerable amount of sympathy with the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Shaw) in his reference to the abolition of the parish school board and he felt certain a number of his constituents would share those views, as school boards with extended areas would not be so economical as those of more restricted area, but he feared they could not hope to retain the parish school board. Referring to the case of Selkirkshire, he had already mentioned that Galashiels and Selkirk had a population of over 19,000, while the landward part of the county had only 3,300. Rates in the burghs were very much higher than in the county, so that the effect of this Bill would be to considerably increase the rural rate. The rural part of the county consisted of two long valleys, the Yarrow and the Ettrick partly pastoral and partly agricultural. The distances children in those parts would have to come to get the advantage of secondary schools was prohibitory. A like difficulty occurred in Sutherlandshire, where perhaps it was even more pronounced than in Selkirk. In Selkirk some of the children desiring the advantage of secondary education would have to come distances of from ten to twenty miles, so that while they could get no benefit from secondary education, their parents, as units in the county educational area, would have to contribute to the rate.

In connection with the proposal as to the equivalent grant he referred to the case of Innerleithen, which had adopted the Free Libraries Act, and with the consent of Lord Balfour of Burleigh, then Secretary for Scotland, the corporation arranging that the money coming from the equivalent grant should go towards assisting the maintenance of this free library. If this money was taken away he did not know what would become of the free library. The whole would cease to exist, unless there was an Act passed to enable the corporation to assess more on the rates. In the town of Peebles a very large amount of improvement had been done by means of the grant, and certainly no more useful way could have been found for expending this money. But if they had borrowed money on the security of obtaining the equivalent grant, its being taken away would cause great inconvenience and would inevitably lead to a large increase on the rates. Therefore, he hoped the Government would change their view with regard to the equivalent grant, the withdrawal of which would create a grave injustice to the towns in the constituency he represented. He would like to see the powers of the education authority increased and a clause introduced into the Bill authorising them to supplement the teachers' pensions from the rates in the case of teachers who were compulsorily retired at the age of sixty-five. The pension now given was £40 or thereby, which was very small, particularly if a man had a family to keep, and there was at the present time no power to increase it. He hoped, however, that these matters would be dealt with in Committee on the Bill.

Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) commented on the difference between an English and Scottish education debate in the House. The reason was obvious. In the case of England they were discussing fundamental principles with great heat and passion, and in the case of Scotland the principles had been long ago settled, and they were discussing details with so much patience that the debates at times seemed almost in danger of becoming dull. The real reason why their discussions on Scottish Education Bills were so pacific was that education in Scotland was not under the control either of any clerical party or of any ecclesiastically-minded laymen. They had had their religious differences, and even religious wars, in Scotland centuries ago, but now they were practically agreed that religious questions in regard to education ought to be determined, not by any section, but by the will of the people.

The present Bill did not attempt anything revolutionary; it proposed to abolish the cumulative vote for school boards and to organise secondary education, bringing the funds voted therefore by Parliament under a simpler mode of administration. He congratulated the Lord-Advocate on a number of useful minor provisions which the Bill contained. There were some matters of controversy, though not of first-rate importance. There was nothing in the Bill with regard to the feeding of school children, yet it was clear that the Government would have to deal with this subject, the importance of which they had already admitted in the case of England. Something would have to be done, either in this Bill or in some other way. The question of the area was perhaps the most important. There were three areas which might be selected for educational administration in Scotland, viz., the parish, which had been the area ever since the Reformation; the county, which had certain indirect advantages, and which had been selected as the area in England; and the district, which had been chosen in the Bill. In Scotland there was a good deal to be said both for the parish and the county as education areas. The parish was clearly the natural area for elementary education, for it was possible for every one who lived in a parish to give vigilant personal attention to the affairs of the parish school, and the parents who resided there were for the most part interested in elementary education. On the other hand, the county was the proper area for secondary education, for no smaller area could deal efficiently with the various grades of secondary education required. Moreover, both parish and county were divisions which had historical associations. The district, however, was a purely artificial area having none of the historical associations of either the parish or the county. The Government in their hesitation as to which of these areas they should select had made a most unsatisfactory compromise between the two, for the district area was too small for secondary and too large for elementary education. He agreed as to the need for a better system of secondary education in Scotland, but he thought it would have been possible to secure that without sacrificing what had been the characteristic merit of Scottish elementary education, viz., the direct oversight of and the immediate touch with the people. At present the parent, the working man, the small farmer, and even the labourer, could sit on the school board, but if elementary education were taken from the parish and given to the district all those sections of the population would be cut off from all possibility of serving on the board. Simply to pay the travelling expenses would not meet the case, because, if the district was a large one, it would mean the loss of a day's work to get to and from the place of meeting. He had received a letter from a gentleman of large educational experience, whose authority, if he could mention his name, would be unquestioned, and the writer said—

> "Long experience as a member of the secondary education committee of my county has convinced me of the impossibility of any board over a large area having any real control at all. The member for each parish will be the only source of information the board has, and the only person with authority in the educational matters of the parish."

So that the parish would not be the authority for its own elementary education, but only the one member which it sent to the district board. The writer went on to say—

> "I greatly fear that the whole control being lodged in boards with large areas will mean that the control passes into the hands of officials, and that official control will stand in the place of the control of the parents of the children."

He was afraid that that was what would happen. In England some of the large counties had found themselves unable properly to control elementary education, and had been forced to create district committees, which were better able to do the work because they came into closer touch with the schools, and had upon them a larger number of members acquainted with the actual condition of affairs. He believed that what was really wanted in England was the creation of bodies larger than the small parishes, and in Scotland the retention of elementary education in the hands of the parish with power to unite small parishes. The parishes in Scotland were much larger than in England, and more nearly corresponded to a combination of three, four, or five English parishes. He held, therefore, that all the Government needed to do for elementary education in Scotland was to give a liberal power of uniting small parishes, the parish being the normal unit for elementary education. He thought the county would be a better area for secondary education. He favoured a county committee either directly-elected by the school boards or by a separate election. To have a body consisting of representatives of the school boards would probably be the simpler way, or they might have a body elected *ad hoc* for the whole county. He thought the former method would be the simplest and it would enable the school boards to work better together. Since the Bill of last year was before the House he thought there had been a considerable change in Scotch opinion and it had been in the direction of a desire to retain the parish as the area.

He wished to say a few words upon the question of grants. Two hon. Members for Edinburgh had already brought before the notice of the House the dissatisfaction which existed in the large burghs with the proposals which the Government had made to lay hands upon the residue grant and the equivalent grant. As regarded the latter grant the case was stronger than for the residue grant because the equivalent grant was expressly given to relieve the rates of the occupiers, and by taking it away a very severe burden would be imposed upon the occupiers who alone bore the rates which were relieved by the equivalent grant. In regard to the other grant the rates relieved were borne by owners and occupiers. It was necessary to warn the Government that, in the great burghs particularly, there was a good deal of feeling on the subject, and that they would find much resistance to the proposals they were making. The Bill proposed to give very large powers to the Scottish Education Department, and the burghs felt that there was no security in its provisions that the Department would have the regard it ought to have to the claims of the burghs to receive in grants for their schools the money which they as taxpayers contributed. The Department were also to receive somewhat dangerous powers to make grants to sectarian schools of the secondary order. Hitherto the Scotch sectarian schools which had received these grants had been elementary schools, and he thought the Government must be prepared for strenuous opposition to the present proposal, which was altogether a new departure, and one which public opinion in Scotland did not approve.

With regard to the provincial councils, he did not quarrel with the Government for giving them limited powers at first. He thought it was not too late to suggest that the simpler form would be to have one council, which would attract a greater number of first-class men and focus Scottish educational opinion much more effectively, and to allow that council to divide itself into committees for the different areas. He associated himself with what had been said as to the necessity of having a separate council for the Highlands, though he thought the whole subject of provincial councils required much further consideration than the Bill seemed to give it. He did not regard St. Andrews, from its local position, the proper centre from which to administer education in the Highlands. He thought the whole question of the provincial councils required more consideration than the Bill gave it, and he commended the matter to the consideration of the House and the Government.

He desired to call attention to a matter which seemed to him to be of considerable importance. It was either the School Board or the Town Council of Edinburgh which had made the suggestion that Parliament should take this opportunity of consolidating all the Education Acts of Scotland. They were numerous and complicated, and it would be a very great convenience for those who had to administer education if this opportunity were taken to pass a consolidating Bill, which could be incorporated with the present Bill, if passed. He credited the Lord-Advocate with a serious intention to pass the Bill, although the seriousness of the Government was doubted.

As to the future stages of the Bill, hon. Members who had spoken had, with the exception of the hon. Member for the Partick Division, expressed the opinion that it should be discussed in Committee of the Whole House. The reason why this Bill should be dealt with in the Whole House would be obvious to every Scotch Member. It was not only a Bill which involved a great many Second Reading questions, but also a great many local questions. It touched local interests in almost every clause, and, therefore, it was a Bill on which every Scotch Member was entitled to have his say in Committee. The question of areas was the most important in the Bill. It affected different counties and burghs very differently. Sutherlandshire under the Bill was one district, and would have one school board, and clearly, therefore, the Member for that county must be on any body that discussed the Bill. The Members for all the Highland counties must be on the Committee, because the measure touched the interests of the Highland districts. The Members for every county where districts were proposed to be united ought to be on the Committee. The Members for burghs should be on the Committee, because they were entitled to say how the proposal to bring burghs into counties would affect the burghs. Clauses 41, 42, and 43, dealing with educational endowments, were very important. Educational endowments in no two burghs were exactly the same, and every burgh was entitled to have its say. There never was a greater case for allowing every Member of the House to have his voice in saying how the Bill would affect his particular constituency, and that could only be done, either by having the Bill referred to Committee of the Whole House, or to a Grand Committee on which every Scotch Member would have a place. The hon. Member for Peebles and Selkirk gave an interesting geographical sketch of these counties, and showed how the Bill would affect them. Clearly the hon. Member must be a member of the Committee which had to discuss the Bill. He was sorry the Prime Minister was not there, because this was a matter in which his voice would be decisive. He put it to the Lord-Advocate that it would only be fair to Scotland that every Member should have an opportunity of expressing his opinion. That would be the best way to facilitate the progress of the Bill. If every Member was not given the opportunity of expressing his opinion in Committee he would have to express it on Report, and no time would be saved. He saw no reason to expect that there would be any protracted discussion in Committee of the Whole House. A measure which must affect materially the future of one of the greatest interests of Scotland deserved to have the knowledge and judgment which every Scotch Member could bring to its consideration. He trusted the Lord-Advocate would give an assurance on behalf of the Government that they would agree to the general wish of the House that the Bill should be discussed in Committee of the Whole House.

THE EARL OF DALKEITH (Roxburgh) said he wished to join other Members on his side of the House in pressing the Government to consider the desirability of referring the Bill to Committee of the Whole House. It was not only reasonable that this should be done, but he thought they might claim to have full and adequate time for the discussion of the Bill. They had not had too much time given to Scottish affairs. The right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had alluded to the provincial councils. Probably that was the only part of the Bill which would be withdrawn at a later stage to please the opposition to it. There was a point on which almost every Member had touched, and on which the Government did not seem inclined to give way. He meant the question of the equivalent grant. He must say, for himself, that he considered it would be a gross injustice if the equivalent grant were withdrawn. The Government had been kind enough to give Scotland £100,000; but probably they anticipated that that balance would grow larger as the years went on; and he thought it would be a pity to stereotype this £100,000. There was every reason to expect that the whole of this sum might still be devoted to the purpose to which it had mainly been applied in the past; and if they required a larger sum for their education fund they would claim rather more justice for Scotland from the Treasury. On many occasions, as for instance, in the case of the Agricultural Rating Act, they knew that Scotland had not been fairly dealt with by the Treasury; and now there was an opportunity when the Treasury could do their country justice.

The other chief point of interest and importance — perhaps the most important of the whole lot—was the question of areas. He agreed with several speakers that the district was not at all a desirable area. It would be very inconvenient; he felt confident that it would not be popular; and he considered it would be most inefficient. In the past the parish area, on the whole, answered well, especially in large parishes; and, therefore, he believed that for elementary education the parish should be the area. He trusted the Government would yet see their way to alter their mind, and to adopt the parish as the unit for elementary education; and the country, or some larger area, as the authority for secondary education. Another point which would be greatly in favour in most places in the country would be that the cost of education should be borne by the districts which at present provided for it. There was a general feeling that it would be most unjust that some districts should be made to pay a very large rate, compared with what they did now, for elementary education to be given in other districts. As regarded technical education they were quite prepared to bear their share; but it would press most hardly on some of the thinly-populated agricultural districts; and if the Government passed an Act to give assistance to those who paid agricultural rates, it seemed rather absurd that, on this particular occasion, they should try and thrust a greater burden upon them. He knew that the people in those districts would look upon that as an injustice and that it would prevent them taking the same interest in education in the future as in the past. One of the great advantages they had in Scotland over England was the local interest the people took in education, and especially in elementary education. That had been very largely stimulated by the small school boards, the members of which were thoroughly well known to the parents of the children. If that was done away with, some of the interest would vanish and that would be most disastrous to the general education of the country. He was aware that some people believed that the more money was spent on education, the better that education would be. He did not altogether agree with that, because it was very easy to spend large sums of money on education and to have very poor results. And what they had to do was to be as economical as they could. At any rate, they should strive to get the best result for the money spent. If that were done there would be less grudging on the part of the ratepayers. The best way to achieve that result was to take the parish as the unit for elementary education, and to develop that up to some larger area for the chief control of secondary education. As regarded the grievances of the teachers under the present school boards, there would be no difficulty in guarding against their occurring in the future. It was quite right that the teachers should have a proper position and fair treatment. He himself knew, from places he had experience of, that in a great number of cases the district area would be most unsatisfactory unless the whole of the districts were combined into a county; but then that would involve too large a board for elementary education. He would again press on the Government to refer the Bill to the Committee of the Whole House; to reconsider the equivalent grant and to separate the administration of primary from secondary education.

*CAPTAIN ELLICE (St. Andrews Burghs) said that so far as he was concerned he would support the Amendment of the hon. Member for Banff in having the Bill sent to a Committee of the Scotch Members. He thought there was a danger of the Bill being swamped by the eloquence of English and Welsh Members. They had seen one Welsh Member called to order already by Mr. Deputy-Speaker; and he felt certain that they would have that repeated during the discussions on the Bill in Committee of the Whole House. He believed that if the Bill were sent to a Committee of all the Scotch Members, with an added number of English Members to give the Government a majority, it would be better.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [8th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

*CAPTAIN ELLICE, continuing his speech, said when the House adjourned he was calling attention to the desirability of allowing the Scotch Members to consider this in a Committee composed of Scotch Members. He pointed out to the Lord-Advocate that if that course were followed it would greatly facilitate the passing of the Bill and save a considerable amount of time. So far as the House was concerned, such a Committee would not only ensure the Bill being passed quickly through the House but it would ensure their getting a good Bill. He himself entirely approved of the proposal to feed hungry children. In the Highlands for many years they had fed the children who had come long distances. They had not grudged the expense, but they quite recognised that in large districts it would be impossible to feed the children without some financial assistance. With regard to the rating clauses the Bill would require a certain amount of alteration. Last year they had a Secretary for Scotland in charge of this Bill, who represented a county constituency. This year they had the Lord-Advocate who represented a burgh constituency. Of the four Scottish Members in the Government only one represented a county constituency. No doubt a fellow feeling made them wondrous kind; he, therefore, hoped that on the question of the withdrawal of the equivalent grant the Government would be more lenient than they had been in the past year. With regard to the transference of the endowments to the school boards he pointed out that the endowments were at present limited to £1,000, but that it was considered desirable that they should be allowed to transfer, if they pleased, those endowments which were over

£1,000 to the school boards; that was to say, that the limit should not be any definite sum but that any of the endowed schools of Scotland should, if they chose, be allowed to transfer their endowments to the school board.

What filled him with amazement was the opposition to the proposal with regard to the provincial council for St. Andrews Burghs. The hon. Member for Leith Burghs, himself an inhabitant of the Kingdom of Fife, had opposed this council. It was very bad taste on the hon. Member's part to make such an attack on his own county. Every one understood that the Highlands were in a different situation to the rest of Scotland. The opinion of all Scottish Members on the Liberal side of the House was in favour of a separate council for Inverness, and as one who had resided longer in Invernesshire than any other Member in the House he would assuredly support the establishment of such a council. The special circumstances of that district made it necessary to have an additional council. There was a large Gaelic-speaking population and many Gaelic-speaking schools. But when it came to a question as to whether Inverness should have a provincial council or whether St. Andrews Burghs should have one, there could be no doubt that St. Andrews had more claim to such a council than Inverness possessed. St. Andrews had the oldest University in Scotland. It was established in 1411, whereas that of Edinburgh was not established till 170 years later. On the provincial councils it was proposed to have the highest educational intellect, and under those circumstances it would be most unfortunate if St. Andrews were left out. If one of these provincial councils was to go it should certainly be that for Aberdeen. Aberdeen was in an out-of-the-way part of the world. As far as the Highlands were concerned it was easier to get to St. Andrews from Perthshire, Skye and the South and West of Inverness than to Aberdeen, and, so far as he could see, Aberdeen might well go to Inverness. He would cordially support the Bill and hoped the measure would be pressed forward in Committee.

*MR. BRIGG (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley) said he wished very briefly to support the appeal put before the House by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen with reference to the limitation of the areas to be brought under the control of the local authorities. That was, in his opinion, a very important matter. He was himself on the local education authority for the West Riding, and they found those large areas most unsuitable. They had 900 schools under the control of the local authority, and that authority had sub-divided the districts into a large number of divisions, each one of which was much larger than the old school board districts, but it was most difficult to carry out the work of education in those districts; in fact, almost impossible. Under the Act of 1902 the local education authority had all the needed powers but could not delegate powers to the local sub-committees to spend money on their own account, because those committees were not the rating authority. It would be very desirable if those committees had power to spend money each on its own school, but, as they had no responsibility for the collection of it they were not allowed to have the responsibility of spending it. The result was that all those local authorities were obliged to apply to headquarters for extremely trivial things. If they wanted to supply a few lead pencils or a little notepaper, they had to send to headquarters for it. As a consequence there was a considerable amount of friction, and it was under those circumstances that he desired to place before the House the undesirability of placing Scotch education in the same position. At the present moment there was a revolt against this system in the Division of Elland. One district council that had been called upon to elect members to the education authority had refused, and the education authority of Elland was stuck fast, and could not move because the district council which ought to have elected members to that education authority had not done so. A considerable amount of friction had been raised in many other places from the same cause. In olden days members of school boards gave time and thought to this matter, but as it now stood the managers were appointed by the authorities and had very little interest in their work, inasmuch as they had to refer everything to headquarters. The failure arose from the fact of their having those very large areas in place of the small ones they had under the school board. The only alternative that had been suggested was to arrange the area so as to make the district small. It would be quite possible to arrange them into what were formerly school board districts. The effect of the present system, so far as the West Riding was concerned, had been that they had lost their director, and he was not sure that they had not hastened the death of their chairman. The position of things at present was actual despair on the part of the committee as to how the thing could be worked. He only mentioned those matters in order to show the desirability of curtailing the areas in the Bill before the House.

*SIR CHARLES RENSHAW said he was bound to say the impression left upon his mind by the observations of the hon. Member for Camberwell was that the hon. Gentleman did not appreciate the difference between education in Scotland and education in England. The hon. Member had spoken of this Bill as an admirable Bill and had contrasted it with the measure passed by this House in 1902 to deal with the question of education in England. But, after all, there was a very substantial difference between the condition of affairs in Scotland and the condition of affairs in England. In Scotland they had a school board to every parish in the country. In England half the children were educated under the school board and half in schools built not by the ratepayers but from voluntary funds. It was this fact which caused the difference between the two countries—the position of affairs which obtained in Scotland as compared with that which obtained in England—in regard to the position from which they approached the question of education. In Scotland they had no very acute religious differences. He thought he was not exaggerating when he said that three-fourths or seven-eighths of the population of Scotland belonged to the Presbyterian Church. The Roman Catholics and the Episcopalians, who constituted the other fourth or eighth of the population, wer in a very small minority, and, so far as the educational system of Scotland was concerned, the views of the great Presbyterian majority prevailed. They had no burning question connected with Church and Dissent, and for his part he did not think that the fears of the hon. Member for Camberwell as to the dangers of a certain part of this measure were likely to be fulfilled. Just as in 1872 they had in Scotland contrived, with a system which had obtained the general assent of the country, to avoid conflicts, so notwithstanding the powers which this Bill proposed to confer for the first time on the new school board authorities, in Scotland there would be no difficulty in exercising those powers, and, if they found it necessary or desirable, in assisting the voluntary schools, which really after all were carrying on a certain amount of educational work in Scotland very successfully and well, and did really deserve some consideration from the ratepayers.

Various questions had been raised in this discussion. First there had been the question of area. The right hon. Member for South Aberdeen criticised the selection of area; he spoke of the parish area, the district area, and the county area, and spoke of the parish area with the same affection with which all who had been interested in Scottish education for the last twenty-five years felt towards that educational institution. The connection with the parish area went back to the time of the Reformation, and there was not the slightest doubt, so far as education was concerned, that the work done under the parochial system had been admirable and effective work; there was equally little doubt, when they were considering the question of further administration, that difficulties had arisen in the demand which was now being constantly made in Scotland for technical, secondary, and higher education, and when it came to be a question of adjusting those requirements to the education of parishes, there came the difficulty which had given rise to this Bill, and which was the necessity for the Bill.

On the Second Reading of the Bill of last year he had expressed the opinion, expressed by the right hon. Member for South Aberdeen that evening, as to the desirability, if it had been possible, of keeping the large old parishes for elementary education purposes and grouping the smaller parishes for the same purposes, and of administering higher, secondary, and technical education on a wider basis. He admitted that if this Bill was to be passed he did not believe it was possible to graft that system on it. They must either take this Bill and accept it as the considered view of the Department and the Government upon Scottish education, or they must reject it. If they accepted it they must bid farewell to the system of administering education on the parochial basis. They had either to accept the proposal of the Government, which was to have a district or burgh authority and to amalgamate the district and form a county board, or they would have to take the county as an area in the first instance, with power to break it up into districts suitable for educational purposes. That, in his opinion, was the simpler and more effective method of solving this question.

Then with regard to the question of rating. The view he took about the rating clause in last year's Bill was that he was most anxious to retain that provision of the Bill that was to retain and charge on each locality the debt which had been incurred by each educational authority. He did not take the view that it would be better to pool the debt and apportion the rate partly on the basis of population and partly on the basis of valuation. Upon the debate on the clause last year a division as between pooling the debt or not was taken and lost in the lobbies by about 233 to 43, and the matter having been decided in that way he supported the proposals to apportion half on population and half on a valuation, which he thought least injurious to the rural parts of the country. The Bill introduced this year proposed that the debt existing in elementary schools should be charged to the parish incurring those debts, but it proposed that the debts incurred in erecting higher-class schools should be a charge, which should be apportioned on the districts. He thought there should be an addition to that. It was not only the high-class secondary schools in the proper sense of the term which were very limited in their numbers, but also the higher-grade departments which contributed to the higher education of the area outside the limits within which they were erected. He took the view that the debt of the higher-grade departments should be a charge on the district and not on the parish, and in his opinion it was desirable in the interests of education, that whatever area might be fixed for educational purposes, one uniform rate should be levied within the area. He was perfectly certain that was the only way to give to the localities a check on undue expenditure and so to prevent extravagance. He did not see any reason whatever why the rate for capital expenditure on elementary schools, whether past or future, should not be levied on the old parochial basis and subject to the old parochial system of reduction or classification. He did not see why all the other charges which came under Sub-section 2 of Clause 23—the rating clause—should not be levied on the gross valuation, so that every one within the area, whether it was county or included municipalities, or whether it was a distinct area, might know that they were paying the same rate and might be able to compare progress, either in regard to the rise and fall of the rate.

There was another portion of the Bill upon which he had a very definite view. He welcomed as warmly as anyone the recent Minute of the Department in regard to the training of teachers, and rejoiced that a Department had sufficient power to issue a Minute so wide in its scope. It set up four committees for the four different parts of Scotland to deal with the training of teachers. An hon. Member had spoken about the dearth of teachers in the country, but it was largely due, not to the fact that there were not plenty of young men and women who were willing to go into the teaching profession, but because the access to that profession had been made so difficult. That was the charge they had to make against the existing system of training teachers in Scotland. He hoped that that Minute which had been issued was to be the beginning of better things in this matter, and that the training of teachers might be put upon a wider and a sounder basis. It would encourage a larger number and a better class to come forward and take their places in the ranks of this noble profession, upon which the future of their country so largely depended. It was not a badly paid profession at the present moment, and he thought the inducements to enter it as compared with the inducements to enter clerical life, or even the ministry in certain parts of Scotland, were very much greater than they were in the two latter cases. But while he rejoiced in the institution of these provincial councils for the purpose of training teachers, he looked upon the proposals in the Bill with regard to the future duties devolving upon those councils with a very doubtful eye. He was all in favour of making the local education authority a strong authority; he was for trusting it and giving it the fullest powers to work out the salvation of its own district, and he looked with almost a feeling of aversion upon the proposal that, at the very outset of the career of the new responsible authorities, provincial councils were to be instituted, which were to be consulted, to check them, and it might be to warp their action. He did hope that before they parted with this measure, whatever powers the new provincial councils were to have as regarded the training of teachers, they would not make any provision which would give them any other work to do until, by the failure of some of the school boards established under the Bill, the necessity for that course had been demonstrated.

With regard to the formation of the new education fund, he would point out that the old fund was originally created by bringing together various sums which had been devoted from time to time either for educational or *quasi*-educational purposes. There was this difference between the Bill of last year and the present one, that last year's measure proposed to take away from local authorities all the money given under the equivalent grant under the Act of 1892. The equivalent grant, which amounted at the time it was given to the rating authorities in Scotland to about £100,000, had now, in consequence of increased sums connected with the collection of public taxation, risen to about £163,000. Last year there was considerable criticism, in which he took part, as to the then proposal of the Government. He did not think that any Member of that House who represented a Scottish constituency could fail to appreciate the fact that both in counties and burghs that money had been used for very many useful purposes. In his own county it had been largely used for the purpose of renewing bridges and of building hospital accommodation, which was necessary in consequence of an increased demand for it. Under this Bill the proposal was to give the local authorities £100,000 and take the balance. The measure would, therefore, give to the local authorities as much as they got when the Act of 1892 was passed, and all the Department proposed to take was the increment of £63,000. He was bound to say that, having regard to the source and origin of the fund, and that the money was originally devoted to educational purposes—[Cries of "No"]—well, undoubtedly the equivalent grant was given to them in respect of the sum which was devoted to the reduction of school fees in England—he thought this money was originally a sum which the Scottish Members, including Dr. Hunter, unanimously decided to devote to the reduction of fees which were then being charged in elementary schools in Scotland. Then came a time when demands for free education were made in England, and in response to that a Bill was introduced by which the Government devoted money out of the public Exchequer for the purpose of doing away with school fees in England altogether. A proportionate amount was devoted to Scotland, and as a result this equivalent grant, which originally had been devoted to educational purposes, was given over for other purposes. Several matters were made a first charge, one of them being a charge for secondary education, but the balance was left to the local authorities either to be used for the purpose of reducing rates or for the purpose of their applying it to some work of public utility approved by the Secretary for Scotland. That being so, he was bound to say that when the Government said that they needed this money now for the purpose of carrying out this scheme of secondary education, and, there being no equivalent grant available, that they proposed to lay more or less violent hands upon this £63,000, they were taking a course which he could not resist. But he should like to make an appeal to his right hon. friend. There had been expressed that day a strong feeling with regard to this matter on behalf of burghs in Scotland. Perhaps a way out of the difficulty might be found by the Lord-Advocate and the Secretary for Scotland agreeing to take a fixed sum out of the grant, say of £50,000, and then they could give to the local authorities, not only the £100,000 which the Bill gave, but the £13,000 and any further increment of it. If that were done he thought it ought to meet the extreme views even of the burgh representatives.

There had been considerable discussion that day upon two other questions; one the question of feeding children in schools, and the other the question of medical inspection. He should like to say this in regard to the feeding of school children, that it was a very easy thing for them in that House to say what every one of them desired, viz., that no hungry child should ever be in attendance at any school which it was compelled to attend. That was a thing upon which they were all agreed, but, when it came to putting the question as to whether there were a large number of such hungry children in Scotland or not, he thought some of them possibly might differ. He had had some experience in connection with school board work in Scotland, and during the twenty-one years he had been connected with it he did not remember ever having this question brought before him, and he was connected with one of the largest rural school boards in Scotland. How many hon. Members had ever been asked in Scotland to subscribe to funds for feeding school children? It might be that such was the case in regard to some schools in the Highlands, but he had never been asked, and, except in one or two of the poorest parts of some of their richest cities, he doubted whether any such need existed. He would therefore ask hon. Members, before they passed legislation of so general a character, to consider that this question might gradually creep into such a position that the cry for relief from the payment of school fees assumed. He would ask them to pause and consider whether in their opinion the mothers and fathers of Scotland were really open to this charge of generally neglecting their children. He did not believe it for a single moment. He did not believe that except in certain districts there was necessity for special treatment of this kind. He thought, however, that in those special localities where the necessity existed power ought to be given to deal with it. But it should be a power which was very carefully restricted so that it might not do more harm than good, because he thought that, if it once came to be felt throughout Scotland that there was to be a general system of feeding school children, it would add enormously to the cost of education, and might seriously interfere with the class of education which they would be able to give.

Then as to the medical inspection which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University would like to have. He admitted that he had seen a report from Dundee which was exceedingly painful reading, as it was a description of people who belonged to a class who would always, unhappily, be with us, but he did not know that having regard to the conditions of life in which those children lived that they could expect them to be free from disease. When he heard, however, that there was to be a general medical inspection of all the day schools in Scotland he asked Members of the House to consider what that was going to cost and whether they were going to get a benefit out of such inspection at all commensurate with that cost. There must be an enormous number of children for whom no such inspection was necessary at all, but if they were going to set up a general system of anthropometrical examination of the children and they were going to do that twice a year the cost would be large. They had 800,000 children in Scotland, and supposing it cost 2s. 6d. a head each time—[Cries of "No!"] His hon. friends shook their heads, but he was sure that they would not get doctors to go through the labour of examining children to the extent suggested in these reports without a substantial fee, especially when they knew that that fee was to come out of the rates or the Exchequer. If the cost was 2s. 6d. per head it would cost £100,000 for each examination. That was equivalent to a penny rate upon the assessable value of Scotland, and he said that whilst it might be necessary to make examinations in certain schools in certain localities and for certain specific objects, he did not believe it was necessary to take Scotland all over, and he deprecated the idea that they should start on a new branch of public expenditure of that kind. Feeding the children and that system of medical examination, when the rates were so high, was not necessary especially when there was a growing feeling that what they wanted was good educational results but as light an addition to the rates as possible. For his part he hoped the Second Reading of the Bill would be passed, but he trusted that no proposal would be made to refer it to a Grand Committee. It should be dealt with by a Committee of the House, and he hoped that they might as soon as possible have it before them in Committee and pass it into law.

Mr. WALLACE (Perth) said he did not propose to discuss the general principle of the Bill because, as far as the discussion had gone, there had been no attack upon it and the debate had been entirely upon questions which would probably be more properly dealt with in Committee. As far as he understood it, if there was a principle underlying the Bill at all it was that of the maintenance in Scotland of the system of government of schools by the people themselves and the election of the authorities *ad hoc*, by those interested in education, to control education. He entirely dissented from his hon. friend opposite who said that the principle applicable to Scotland was not applicable to England, and he regretted very much that the Government did not last year, having introduced their Bill, press it forward and carry it. If it had been carried at that time it would have been received in Scotland with great cordiality, but in the interval which had elapsed a more critical examination had been given and there was the coldness which always followed delay. Although, therefore, the Bill would be acquiesced in, there was not now the same feeling of entire agreement in regard to it which prevailed a year ago.

The first question which had been raised was the question of area. Some hon. Members had proposed the larger area of the county as an alternative to the Bill, and others had proposed the smaller area of the parish, but for himself he thought the Government had been very happy in their selection. He thought that they had struck the golden mean between the two, as he considered the county was too large and for practical purposes many of the parishes were too small. He did think, moreover, that it was an important thing that they should have larger areas than at present, as he had noticed in Scotland in connection with country parishes that the teacher who got an appointment in a school settled down practically for the rest of his life. The teacher had not the opportunities which prevailed in larger school boards of promotion, and the result was that, with the best intentions in the world, oft-times the stimulus which the opportunity of promotion gave was taken away from him. He was sure that for the purpose of getting effective teachers the teacher should have the opportunity which would be given him under a larger school board. He should regret, however, if the effect of the measure should be to destroy the interest taken by parents in the education of their children. He realised that in Scotland school boards were very unlike school boards in England, and were bodies which were largely composed of the parents of children. They were largely composed of working men such as the grieve and the small crofter. He had seen these men do the most effective work in the world upon those school boards because the one thought of the Scotch parent in this matter was not economy, but how they could get the best education for the children attending the schools. That was the difference which existed between the parish school boards of Scotland and the small boards in parishes in England. The one desire of the latter was to save the rates—a very worthy object, but not when they were saved at the expense of education. He should be very sorry if representation, of the kind he had alluded to, on the school boards of Scotland were to cease.

He thought it would be very necessary that some provision should be made by which members of school boards should have their expenses provided for. It was all very well to say that they ought to sacrifice themselves and that they ought to give their time for the purposes of education. They had to live and to work, and they could not afford to attend those meetings unless the House made some provision of the kind he had indicated by which the necessary expenses of coming some distance to the central point where the school board met should be paid. If that was not done the House would destroy altogether the representation of that class in Scotland and that would be a great misfortune. On this point he had some doubt and misgiving as regarded the destruction of these smaller school boards, but he thought it could be met in the way he had suggested. He also thought that the Lord-Advocate might have considered in connection with this matter the difficulties in regard to the four districts described in the Bill. He thought that there were other large towns and cities in Scotland who might have had school boards. He knew that there were cities in Scotland large enough for the purpose of having an effective school board. He would take the case of Paisley, and suggested that in Committee the right hon. Gentleman might see whether he could not extend the number of districts.

Something had been said in regard to underfed children in Scotland. It might be true and was true, no doubt, that the grievance was not so great in Scotland as it was in England, but still it existed in Scotland, as any one who knew Scotland knew well, in many of their great cities. The Scotchman was nothing if not economical, and nothing could be more economical than to see that a child should be sent to school with strength to assimilate the education which was given. Money spent in order to enable a child to appreciate and take in the education was not money wasted, but the best investment that the State could possibly make. He supported that view not merely on the ground of humanity, but on the further ground that no truer economy could be found than that which enabled a child to make the best use of the education provided for him.

Another point was that no doubt there was a strong feeling at the present time with reference to the proposal of the Lord-Advocate with regard to the grants which the cities enjoyed. The effect of the Lord-Advocate's proposal would be to alter the incidence of taxation as between the owner and the occupier entirely to the advantage of the owner, and against that the cities protested. He did not object to the money being devoted to education, but he did object to an alteration which would be in the interest of owners as against that of occupier, and he would take strong objection to the clause in Committee.

He would say only one word on the denominational difficulty. A clause in the Bill gave power to the school boards to give grants to other than schools under their own absolute control. That might shock some English Members, but in Scotland they took the view that they could trust the people in those matters. Practically, they never had any religious difficulty in Scotland; they had got rid of it simply by letting the people determine the question for themselves.

As to the provincial councils, he did not like them at all. He believed they would be a source of danger and friction, and would tend to destroy responsibility, but so long as the Scottish Education Department was in London they would probably be a necessity. The true solution was to bring the Education Department to Edinburgh into a new atmosphere and under new influences; there would then be no necessity for provincial councils. On the whole he congratulated the Lord-Advocate on the Bill, and hoped it would be speedily passed into law.

THE LORD-ADVOCATE (Mr. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgton) said the

Government could not complain of the reception which had been accorded to the Bill, but there had been a suggestion made in some of the speeches that neither last session nor this were the Government really anxious to get the Bill. He hoped that that suggestion would not receive credence either in England or in Scotland. There was no Bill that the Government, and especially the members of it who were connected with Scotland, were more anxious to get. He was convinced, indeed, from communications which he had received from all classes and sections of people in Scotland, that there was no Bill which Scotland desired more to get, even if it were passed without any Amendments at all. The enormous preponderance of Scottish feeling was in favour of it. The discussion, interesting and useful though it had been, had dealt with matters which were rather Committee points than Second Reading questions, and it would not be right for him, on many of those matters, to give a final or definite decision until they had been considered in detail in Committee.

The hon. Member for Camberwell, who had made his usual speech on Scottish education, did not take account of the unfortunate position of England so far as education was concerned. [Dr. MACNAMARA: I do.] The differences between the two countries began long before 1902 or even 1870—[Dr. MACNAMARA: I know]—when the English people were unfortunate enough to take refuge in Cowper-Temple clauses and the refusal to have a universal school board system or to recognise that they had trusted far too long to voluntary and Church methods. It was too bad, however, now not to recognise the debt which England owed to the Church, for no other body in England had done its duty in this matter so effectually as the Church had done.

DR. MACNAMARA: I have often admitted it.

MR. SCOTT DICKSON said the hon. Member declared that the Government dare not abolish school boards in Scotland. That was because the Scottish people were a long way ahead of England, and the hon. Member had better set about educating the English people before he tried his hand on the Scotch. One could not help recalling that the consideration of this Bill came up at a time when the author of the Act of 1872, of which it was an Amendment, was retiring from official life, and all would recognise the debt which Scottish education owed to Lord Young.

The question which had been referred to most frequently in the debate was that of the areas, and upon that he did not think the Government could see their way to modify the position they had laid down in the Bill. There were two great problems to consider in discussing this question of areas. Undoubtedly, so far as elementary education was concerned, the smaller the area the better would be the administration. ["No."] On the other hand, the same principle would not apply to secondary education. Accordingly the Government had endeavoured to find some mode of reconciling these two difficulties; and, giving the best consideration they could to the matter, they thought that the district really afforded, on the whole, the best solution, the best compromise. Undoubtedly there were cases where a smaller area might have been better, and other cases where a larger area would have been preferable; it was not at all a Party question, and on the whole the Government had thought the district was the best basis on which to work. Last session large concessions were made which went a long way to meet the difficulties that were raised, and it was not thought necessary to divide the House on the question. He could not think a point like this was worthy, he did not say of consideration, but of long discussion, either upon Second Reading or in Committee, when it was borne in mind that the House unanimously accepted the principle last session and when, in addition, it was remembered that they had taken care to give greater elasticity to the powers which would enable greater combination or greater division to be made according to the special circumstances of each division of the country. The Government had, in this respect, shown their anxiety to meet, as far as they possibly could, the fair claims of those who differed upon this matter, and he could not, as at present advised, offer any hope that they would change their views on this question. He trusted that nothing they did would diminish local interest in education, because that would be an enormous misfortune. They hoped the provisions they had introduced with regard to management, even as they stood or under reasonable amendment, would secure that local interest would not only not be diminished, but would be even enhanced in the future.

As to the financial aspects of the Bill, he thought too much had been said about the question of the equivalent grant. Personally he represented a Division of Glasgow where the town council held strong views on the question with which he was sorry not to be able to agree. It was some consolation, however, to believe that he had the cordial support of the Glasgow School Board.

Mr. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): They are getting the money.

Mr. SCOTT DICKSON said that was no doubt the case, and even town councils were human. The equivalent grant really had its origin in education, because in the Act under which it was given it was enacted that there should be distributed

> "a sum of £100,000 or such other sum as with the sums directed to be applied under the provisions of the three preceding sub-sections of this section will be equal to the fee grant in Scotland."

Originally fixed at £100,000, the amount had grown to between £160,000 and £170,000, and last year in the Bill as introduced it was proposed to take the whole of the money. Representations were then made both by county and by burgh councils, and, as a result, Lord Dunedin intimated that he was prepared to say that he would not take more than the surplus over the £100,000 for education. He thought that concession was accepted by many representing both the counties and the burghs as fair and reasonable—["Hear, hear!" and "No."]—that was his view of it—and he confessed that, so far as he was concerned at that moment, though he would listen to reasonable arguments, he was not prepared to go one halfpenny beyond that arrangement. He hoped he should receive the support of hon. Members on both sides of the House in securing that the £60,000 should go to education. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Aberdeen, who was in duty bound to support his constituents in this matter, had spoken of the heavy burden this would place on the rates. As a matter of fact the total difference would be ½d. in the £, but taking into account that some rates were paid by occupiers alone, and some by owners and occupiers, the net balance would be something like one farthing in the pound, and, for himself, he was not sorry for any of the burghs if they lost that farthing in the interest of education. So far as that matter was concerned, he did not see his way, although he would keep an open mind, to suggest that there was any room for concession at all. The suggestion of his right hon. friend the Member for Govan with regard to the enumerated districts and the pooling arrangement affected only Edinburgh and Glasgow, and if there was a general desire in those districts that the course suggested by the right hon. Gentleman should be taken it seemed fair and reasonable that it should be done. That did not apply to the other districts of Aberdeen and Dundee, as they included only the existing school board districts, Dundee was naturally desirous of enlarging its boundaries, but he did not feel inclined to concede that. Govan and Leith, on the other hand, were naturally anxious to remain where they were, but he did not feel inclined to concede that either, so that perhaps the one might be set off against the other.

As to the grant to voluntary schools, the hon. Member for Camberwell did not seem to appreciate that it would be made only under Minute containing general conditions, and no doubt the structural and sanitary conditions of the schools would be taken into account. There would be no special provision for voluntary schools apart from other schools. In Scotland they settled their religious differences in regard to education thirty years ago, and they did not want to raise them again. They had never had passive resisters in Scotland. They had rated Roman Catholics and Episcopalians, and had refused to teach Episcopalianism or Roman Catholicism except in some Highland parishes where Roman Catholics were in a majority. He sincerely hoped that no religious question would be raised on this Bill. In Scotland they had reached the stage where they thought they could conduct their education on lines suitable to their views on denominational education, and the minority recognised that they must submit to the majority in the matter. He hoped that that feeling would prevail throughout the proceedings on the Bill, as they would then avoid an enormous amount of difficulty and contention which it seemed to be impossible to avoid south of the Tweed.

DR. MACNAMARA: Why did you not give us the Scotch Bill?

MR. SCOTT DICKSON: Well, you are not educated up to it.

Other important questions raised were those relating to medical inspection and the feeding of children. So far as medical inspection was concerned, he thought they had gone far enough in Sections 26 and 46. He did not suggest that they had gone too far. It was quite proper that those powers should be given, and now that public attention had been directed to the question local authorities might be trusted to do what was fair and reasonable in the matter. Without desiring in the least to make Party capital out of the fact, he might remind the House that the question had been brought prominently forward during the existence of the present Government. If public opinion had been focussed on this question of the physical condition of the children in the schools, it had been the result of the Royal Commission on Physical Training in Scotland and the Committee on Physical Deterioration. No public body concerned with the education of the young would now fail to give due attention to the question. As to the feeding of the children, the Royal Commission, which was not a Party body, reported that in Scotland existing difficulties were to a large extent met by voluntary effort in co-operation with the school boards. The Commission was distinctly of opinion that, apart from providing for the kitchen accommodation, no further charge should be put upon the rates.

MR. McCRAE pointed out that the Commission was confined to the question of physical training, and it was only so far as it had to do with physical training that the Commission was able to deal with the question of feeding.

MR. SCOTT DICKSON reminded the hon. Member that the Commission made careful inquiry into the medical inspection and the feeding of the children, and into the question of how the underfed children should be dealt with, the result of the inquiry being as he had stated. That being so he thought it would be a strong order to say that that House, after an examination which could not be exhaustive or satisfactory, should go beyond the recommendation of the Commission, which heard all the evidence and considered it carefully. He was sure that it would not be thought for a moment that they on that side of the House were less concerned about this question than members of the Opposition. Certainly, if ever there was a question devoid of Party this question was. One heard charges against Imperialism, but this was the very basis of Imperialism, and therefore he was sure that, whatever their views might be as to the course to be taken, no one would doubt for a moment that Members on the Government side were entirely in sympathy with the views of those who desired to do what was best in this matter in view of all the circumstances of the case. But it was necessary to bear in mind the Report of the Commission and the fact that they had not only to deal with the children of paupers, but also with the children of people who were just a little above paupers, and who were determined to secure that they should be independent of public aid. They had also to remember that they had voluntary schools to deal with, and they could not provide food for the children in the Board schools and say that the children in the voluntary schools should not be provided with it. All he would say on this matter was that they had safe ground to go upon if they took the recommendations of the Commission as a tentative measure, and if that did not prove satisfactory then they might go further. But in what was really an experimental matter he suggested that they should not go further at present than those who had been appointed to consider the matter had advised.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil) asked whether the Lord-Advocate was prepared to go as far as the Report of the Commission in saying that—

> "Powers should be given to provide a meal and to demand from the parents the payment of the cost."

Mr. SCOTT DICKSON said that if the hon. Member would look at paragraphs 165 to 174 of the Report he would see that the Commission suggested that certain steps should be tried to begin with. He thought they might at least try this to begin with. They should endeavour to get more co-operation between the school boards and voluntary agencies, and by doing that they would get out of the difficulty. He had made inquiries from the school inspectors, and from many of the leading educationists in Scotland, and he was quite convinced that he was expressing enlightened public opinion upon the matter when he said that they ought not to go beyond the recommendations of the Commission upon this question. All he would say on this matter was that they had safe ground to go upon if they took the recommendations of the Commission as a tentative measure, and, if that did not prove satisfactory, then they might go further. But let them make this experiment first.

Reference had been made to the training of teachers, and he quite appreciated many of the observations made. At the same time, he thought the proposals of the Government embodied in the Bill and in the Minute of the Department had met with general approval. He had no doubt any points raised could be satisfactorily met in Committee.

As to the provincial councils, he did not think sufficient attention had been paid to the very considerable powers given to them. Some trust in these matters must be given to the Education Department, which had not proved unworthy of trust in the past. He was sure the desire of the Department would be to see that these councils were strong representative bodies whose advice would be likely to be of service. With regard to what had been said about the Universities, he thought that was a matter more for Committee, and so far as he was concerned he saw no difficulty in having an additional provincial council in order that the views of the Highland population should receive adequate consideration and attention, and more especially that they should secure adequate provision for the teaching they required, according to their special needs. He did not think that would raise any difficulty at all, and it would not cause any loss of time in dealing with this question. As for the powers of the committees established under the Bill, he thought they had given them a great deal. The Government had not been able to meet the views of those who preferred a national council, but he trusted that the joint committee they had established would be accepted as evidence of their desire to see that the provincial councils should have the opportunity of meeting and consulting each other.

The only other point he had to deal with was in reference to the future procedure in regard to the Bill. He did not know whether the kind things which had been said about this Bill by hon. Members opposite would be followed up by equally kind action in the future and equally short speeches. Failing that, of course, a Bill of the dimensions of this measure could very easily be killed. He had no answer to make to that question until he knew what was the attitude of hon. Gentlemen opposite towards the Motion of the hon. Member for Banffshire, on the Paper, that the Bill should be referred to a Committee consisting of all the Members from Scotland, together with fifteen other Members to be nominated by the Committee of Selection.

Mr. THOMAS SHAW: Will my right hon. friend give us a Committee of the Whole House if that Motion is withdrawn?

Mr. SCOTT DICKSON: Certainly. He had endeavoured before the Second Reading came on to arrange that that should be so, but he had been unable to do so.

Mr. BLACK (Banffshire): Will the right hon. Gentleman undertake that, if the Bill goes to a Committee of the Whole House, the views of the Scottish Members shall prevail?

Mr. SCOTT DICKSON said he should like to know who was the Leader of the Opposition in this matter. The hon. Member for Hawick Burghs imposed one condition, and then the hon. Member for Banffshire wished to impose another condition. They would never get the Bill through at all if that was the way they were going to proceed. He felt certain that the people in Scotland would understand the position, and if they did not get a Committee of the House they would know that the reason was on account of the opposition of hon. Members opposite, and they would know that it was because hon. Members opposite could not agree as to the course to be pursued. He was prepared to accept the suggestion of the hon. Member for Hawick, but as to the proposal of the hon. Member for Banffshire, they should never get the Bill if that were carried. As time was the essence of the whole thing, he was prepared to give a Committee of the Whole House, provided the Bill was read the second time that night and there was no further trouble about getting into Committee.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): It has always been urged from the Liberal Benches that all big Scotch measures like this should be referred to the Scotch Members, with a decent margin of other Members to preserve etiquette in the matter, but the Committee should comprise all the Scotch Members. It is very seldom that we have so big a Scotch Bill at this, and why should the Scotch Members not be allowed to have their say upon it, not in the sense of letting off speeches, but in the sense of having their votes recorded and their influence having proper weight in the decision of this question. The Lord-Advocate is rather scornful of the idea put forward by my hon. friend the Member for Banffshire, that if it is to be treated in the Whole House only Scotch votes should be counted. I admit that that is a novelty, but it is not an idea which should be treated in a scornful way, because it at least has common sense at the back of it. The Lord-Advocate comes forward in a sort of Dutch auction, and asks us to make a bargain by which we are to agree to his proposal that the Bill shall be dealt with in the Whole House on certain conditions, or else some dreadful things will happen. The right hon. Gentleman has spoken about the value of time in regard to the future fortunes of the Bill. But has there been any waste of time? Not a moment. We have no desire to obstruct the Bill. But, as I have said, we have always insisted upon the principle that a Bill of this kind should be decided by the Members from Scotland; and if the right hon. Gentleman will not give us a purely Scotch Committee, we should prefer the open light of a Committee of the Whole House to a hole-and-corner Committee upstairs; although it has been our experience in similar cases in the past that while, so far as the Scotch Members are concerned, we have had majorities of two, three, or four to one, we have been overborne by the votes of English, Irish, and Welsh Members.

*Mr. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid) said this Bill was of a highly technical character, and one which the ordinary member of the public could not be expected fully to comprehend without a much fuller explanation and criticism than had yet appeared, either in the Press, or in the speeches of supporters of the Bill. Indeed, it would not be until the Bill had passed into law, and was in actual working, that the general public could or would comprehend the drastic and reactionary nature of the changes contemplated. In the meantime, the Bill had been discussed, and, in the main approved of, by various educational authorities from the point of view of their personal interests; and the interests of the teachers had been well looked after by their powerful organisation, which had been unceasing in its efforts, and which had been able to claim that all or nearly every one of their recommendations had been embodied in the Bill, and whose one desire was to see the Bill speedily passed in its present shape. It had also been approved of by voluntary school managers, who were specially interested in certain provisions of the Bill, which, while continuing unimpaired the existing control of their schools, permitted not only of further grants from Imperial and Scotch sources, but also from the rates, at the will of a school board, subject to such conditions as the school board might impose. The Bill had also the active approval of the Glasgow School Board, as, by the Bill, not only was its own autonomy preserved, but a further population of not less than 208,000 was added to its existing population of 623,000, by the abolition of Govan as a separate school board district. Then it went without saying that the teachers in both the Govan and Glasgow schools actively supported the Bill, inasmuch as they believed that the larger area would furnish them with a greater field for promotion. Now, these were all powerful influences, whose opinions on educational matters had deservedly much weight with the general public in Scotland, although, in the matter of this Bill their personal interests predominated. The Bill had been but little discussed from the point of view of the general public. There had been a great deal of head-shaking and disapproval of the Bill in many influential quarters, but there had been no organisation to combat the powerful influences at work on the part of interested education authorities, and, hence, it was claimed that the feeling of Scotland was in favour of the Bill, whilst, in reality, the nature of the Bill and its effect had been little discussed from the point of view of the parents and the general public. Finally, the Bill had the hearty approval of the Scotch Education Department, by whom it had been drawn up; who had collared for education nearly all the Imperial grants given to Scotland, and who, by the Bill, had centralised in themselves (a body sitting in London), practically all power and authority as regarded education in Scotland; whilst the education authorities and even the provincial councils created by the Bill were simply so much educational machinery to carry out the behests of the Department. The distribution of huge grants of money were at the unfettered disposal of the Department. The Bill no doubt provided for these monies being distributed under Minutes to be laid before Parliament; but whilst these Minutes were put on the Table for information, there was no power in the House of Commons to discuss and amend them, or to prevent their coming into effect, except by the drastic remedy of a change of Government produced by a defeat on the Education Estimates.

When the Education Bill of last year was introduced it seemed to meet with a favourable reception. That approval, however, was not due to any inherent merits of the Bill, but rather to the relief that was felt when it was announced that, contrary to the English Bill, and to the arguments of the Government thereon, the Bill continued the recognition of the principle of popularly-elected school boards. It was not a case of approval of the Bill as being better for education, but of relief that the Bill was not worse. He had been unfortunate in not having an opportunity of speaking on the Bill of last session, either on its introduction or on the Second Reading. If, therefore, he went pretty fully into the Bill on this occasion, it was because this was the first and only opportunity which he had had for discussing the Bill as a whole. Besides, there were obvious advantages of a full discussion on Second Reading.

The leading features of the Bill were that, in the first place, it abolished 920 parish and parish district school boards and fifty-seven burgh school boards, substituting for them 107 county and county district school boards and four burgh school boards. Glasgow (including Govan, Partick, Kinning Park, Rutherglen, and Pollokshaws), Edinburgh (including Leith), Dundee, and Aberdeen. making one hundred and eleven in all. Secondly, the Bill also sought to deprive county councils and town councils of a residue granted to them by Parliament in 1890—amounting roughly to £70,000 per annum—which they had power to apply either to the relief of rates, or to technical education, but which they had been applying to the extent of three fourths to technical education and of only one-fourth to the relief of rates. Thirdly, the Bill further sought to deprive local authorities of a large portion of the residue given to them under the Act of 1892—being a sum of ten shillings per child in average attendance, less certain preferential payments amounting to about £168,000. This, for the current year worked out at a clear residue of £182,000, obtained by taking the fee grant of this year (£350,000), and deducting the preferential payments. The residue was an annually increasing one, increasing with the increase in the school attendance. The Bill of last session appropriated the whole of the residue. The present Bill allowed local authorities to retain a fixed sum of £100,000, but appropriated the balance, namely, £82,000 a year, plus the increment of future years. Fourthly, the Bill deprived popularly-elected bodies, such as county councils and town councils, of that say and control in subsidising secondary and technical education, both in counties and burghs, which they had been exercising for the last fifteen years to the great benefit of secondary and technical education within their districts. In the distribution of this money, the local authorities were able to act on their own local knowledge of the value of the secondary educational work done in counties and burghs, and, having no schools of their own, these local authorities were able to treat all schools impartially in the distribution of the grants. No complaints had been made against the distribution, whilst no valid reason had been assigned why county councils and town councils should be superseded in the management of these funds. The great value of popularly-elected bodies lay in the interest in education which was thereby created and aroused in the community, and which was so essential to the progress of education.

Although education was not in Scotland a Party question, there was much in this Bill which partook of a Party character. The Liberal policy had always been to encourage, whilst the Conservative policy had generally been to discourage, popularly-elected management and control. The present Government favoured county councils, but a Liberal Government passed the Education Act, 1872, establishing school boards in every parish and burgh in Scotland, which the present Bill sought to abolish. A Liberal Government also took an early opportunity to establish parish councils in every parish, and so brought popularly-elected institutions as close as possible to the doors of the people. Parish councils, no doubt, would next be threatened if the present Government had a longer lease of power. That the people of Scotland appreciated the management of their local affairs was shown by the avidity with which populous places, consisting of 700 inhabitants, had been erected into burghs. In England the present Government had abolished popularly-elected school boards, and had relegated education to be dealt with by an education committee appointed by the county council. In Scotland the Government had not dared to go that length; but they had gone a long way in that direction by seeking to abolish 1,000 school boards and to replace them by only 111 school boards; whilst at the same time depriving county councils and town councils of all say in secondary education.

From this survey, it must be obvious that the Bill opened up a wide field for discussion, and that it was not a Bill which ought to be allowed to pass without such a full discussion, both on Second Reading and in Committee, which the importance of education, and the great changes involved, necessarily demanded. Schools giving public education—not wholly of an elementary character, but including secondary—had existed in every parish in Scotland since 1696, and in some cases before that. The parish was not only the area for education, but also for the church, the management of the poor, and such like. Accustomed to act together in every matter relating to the parish area, and affecting the well-being of the parishioners, each parish came to have a unity and characteristic of its own, which made it differ essentially from any of its neighbouring parishes. Accordingly, the Education Act, 1872, not only perpetuated the parish area, but also established school boards in burghs, handing over to these latter the schools in the burgh which were of a secondary character. Parliament thus recognised that education was essentially bound up with the life of the people, and that the inhabitants of burghs might have views and aspirations with regard to education totally different from those in the landward portion of parishes. No complaints had been made of the manner in which existing school boards had performed their work. On the contrary, the reports of His Majesty's inspectors spoke most highly of educational progress, and of the manner in which education, both primary and secondary, was being encouraged, alike by parents, ratepayers, and local authorities. There was nothing which a school board created under this Bill might do which could not be equally and better done by existing school boards, if the power were conferred.

The county and county district area which it was proposed by the Bill to substitute was quite a modern area, with no special reference to population, and formed with reference to such subjects as roads and bridges, sanitation, and the like, matters in which the people of the district had a common interest as ratepayers, but not affecting their life so closely as education. The county and county district area presented every variety and anomaly. Let him take for a contrast Buteshire—the constituency of Mr. Graham Murray who brought forward the Bill of last session—and compare it with the Middle Ward of Lanarkshire, in which Mid Lanark was situated. Buteshire, with a population of 18,787 had at present two school boards in Arran, three in Bute, and one in Cumbræ. By the Bill Buteshire would have three school boards—one in each of Arran, Bute, and Cumbræ, the latter having only a population of 1,800. The Middle Ward of Lanarkshire, on the other hand, which had a population of 322,000, about four times the population of Dumbartonshire and three times the population of Perthshire, and covered an area extending from and including Airdrie to Cambuslang and thence to Shotts, was only to have one school board, and the existing nineteen school boards were to be abolished, the officers and servants being pensioned. In the case of Renfrewshire, with a population of 295,000, there were to be two school boards, whilst twenty-three existing school boards were to be abolished.

The effect of this change of area was that the parishes and burghs in Scotland which had hitherto had the full control of their education—the appointment and dismissal of teachers, the fixing of salaries, the erection of school buildings, the determination of the school rate, the enforcement of compulsory powers and the exemption of children from attendance at school—would be deprived of that control, which would be exercised by a school board whose head office, no doubt, would be in some central position in the county or county district, but which would be equally inconvenient for a large number of parishes.

The Bill, although discarding the parish and burgh area in regard to school control, had not been able altogether to discard the parish area. Each parish was to be separately assessed for the annual sum necessary to pay off existing loans for school buildings erected in the parish, whilst the annual sum necessary to pay off future loans for any new school buildings which the school board created by the Bill might erect was to be charged upon the parish or parishes whose educational requirements the schools were calculated to serve. A parish council might appeal to the Education Department against any determination of the school board on this matter of capital expenditure for schools. The whole of the other expenditure of the school board, including school board contests, was to be paid out of the common fund of the entire school board district, to be apportioned among the parishes according to their valuations in the valuation roll. The school rate was to be collected in each parish along with the poor rate, and was to be subject to the same classification of occupier's rate (if any) as the poor rate. The school rate would not, therefore, be uniform throughout the education district, but the Bill provided a means for arriving at a hypothetical rate in determining certain grants. At present, a parish or burgh was left free to rate itself, to appoint its own teachers, and to push on its own education untrammelled by any interference of neighbouring parishes. By the Bill it might find itself thwarted in its desire to appoint a superior class of teachers by a majority of representatives who might decline to assess the whole district for such increased expenditure, whilst the parish or burgh would not be able to burden its own rate. A school board might also insist on a parish or burgh accepting against its will a teacher from another school in the same education district whom the school board might be desirous of promoting. The necessary effect of combining parishes into a county or county district area would be that some parishes would have to pay more school rate and others less than heretofore. Parishes who were to pay less might be expected to be satisfied, but parishes which were to pay more would have a decided grievance. The Bill did not present an equitable solution of this matter. Some adjustment would be required having regard to the existing variety of school rate in the different parishes.

The wider area would lead to extravagance of management without any corresponding educational benefit, whilst the management would drift more and more into the hands of officials and further away from popular control. Indeed, that was just one of the results which the teachers expected to follow from the larger area. The larger area would also render it impossible for working men from a distance to become members of the school board. Provision would have to be made for payment of expenses. The Bill provided for the appointment of school managers. In the case of the four larger burghs, the school board might, but were not bound to, appoint managers either for one school or for a group of schools. All existing school boards had that power which was conferred by the Act of 1872; but it had been little, if ever, acted upon. The existing school boards had undertaken the work personally, which was in the interest of all concerned, whether teacher or pupil, parent or ratepayer. In the case of county or county district school boards managers, must be appointed for each school or group of schools under their charge. The number of managers and the appointment of the managers rested with the school board and not with the people of the parish. The Bill of last year did provide that two-thirds of the managers were to be appointed, in the case of schools situated in a burgh by the town council, and in other cases by the parish council or the landward committee. Even that little concession to local control was taken away by the Bill of this year, showing to what an extent the Bill was being controlled in the supposed interest of the teachers. School managers were to have no power of raising money by rate or loan, or of incurring capital expenditure, or of appointing or dismissing teachers, whilst the managers must observe such rules, conditions, and restrictions as the school board might from time to time prescribe. The managers were to include the member or members of the school board representing the electoral division or burgh, as the case might be, in which the school was situate. The appointment of managers under such circumstances was simply a sham, giving an appearance of local control where, in reality, there was none. He wished the teachers much joy in their association with the class of managers who accepted office under such conditions. Certainly, the *status* of such managers could not be compared with the *status* of members of existing school boards chosen by the people.

There was another matter specially affecting the interest of the parent dealt with in the Bill, namely, the school attendance committee. At present the power of compelling parents to perform their duty of providing efficient elementary education, and of granting exemption to individual children from the obligation to attend school, was vested in, and was exercised personally by, the members of the school board, who were personally acquainted with the district, with the circumstances of the people, and with the conditions of employment. That was one of the most important duties which school boards had to perform. It was laid upon them by the Act of 1901. In the wider area, a parish might only have one school board representative. The Bill provided for delegation to a school attendance committee or committees of their own number to which they were to have power (but there was no compulsion) to add—

> "Such number of persons connected with the locality, not being members of the school board, as they may see fit, not exceeding one-half of the whole number of the committee."

There was no security here that parents would continue to receive that protection which at present they were receiving from the local knowledge of school board representatives. There was a good deal of friction arising at present owing to the action of the Department in seeking to over-ride the exemptions granted by school boards. He had had this matter brought under his notice in visitations throughout Mid Lanark and he had no hesitation in saying that matters were approaching a crisis. Perhaps it might be said that the wider area would result in fewer exemptions being granted. Yes, but fewer exemptions might in many cases mean greater poverty and the inability of parents to feed and clothe their children—the man with the smallest and most precarious wage having not infrequently the largest family. The Education Act of 1872, in making education compulsory, recognised that education was a matter of personal and vital concern to parents, and an interference with parental duty and responsibility. Prior to 1872 education was not compulsory, although as a rule parents did give their children an education compatible with their means. As education was not compulsory, the parent had the choice of school, especially in populous places. The effect of the 1872 Act was to kill private adventure schools and to leave parents with no choice of school other than Board school. The Act, however, appointed school boards for every parish and burgh, to whom the control of education was handed over. In order that the interests of parents might be protected, a wide franchise for school board purposes was adopted, not merely household suffrage in counties, but of every person whose name appeared on the valuation roll, without any disqualification through non-payment of rates. For the better protection of minorities the cumulative vote was given. Not only was the cumulative vote taken away, which no one objected to, but this personal touch and control of the parent in the electing of a parish school board was also taken away in breach of the undertaking given when education was made compulsory.

He asked, now, what was the justification for such a drastic change as the abolition of parish and burgh school boards. It was not said that the management of education by existing school boards had been a failure. On the contrary, the annual Reports of the Scotch Education Department were a series of annual congratulations of the steady progress of education both in regard to school attendance and quality. By the Estimates, the grant this year was now £1 4s. per scholar. In the last published Report of the Department, that for the year ended August 31st, 1903, it was stated—

> "The increase in the number of scholars on the register, 16,875, as compared with an increase of 1,177 for the preceding year, is sufficiently striking; but it is all the more remarkable that it is traceable for the most part to an increase in the number of older scholars. The increase may be taken as a measure of the efficacy of the Education (Scotland) Act, 1901, and it is satisfactory to find that it has been accompanied by more than a corresponding increase in the average attendance. The percentage of average attendance to the number on the register, 85 per cent., is the best on record."

Again, it could not be said that the wider area would attract a better class of members for the school board. Take the case of Glasgow School Board. He did not think that there was any special superiority in the members of that school board; whilst on smaller school boards, from the very fact that they were smaller and possessed a local interest, some of the best educational talent would be found. There remained, however, one argument which was put forward in every speech delivered from the Government Bench in support of the county area in the English Bill, namely, that of co-ordinating all education, primary and secondary, in one education authority. The word "co-ordination" in their mouths rolled as sweetly as the blessed word Mesopotamia. However applicable the co-ordination argument might have been in the case of England, it was utterly inapplicable to the case of Scotland. In England the education to be given was elementary and was so described in the Act of 1870; and many were familiar with the Cockerton case, where the London School Board was surcharged for providing education which was of a secondary character. In Scotland, on the other hand, there never had been any division of education into elementary and secondary, and the Education (Scotland) Act, 1872, made no such distinction. The national system of education in Scotland was never limited to elementary. The parish schools were the usual feeders of the University. Under the Act of 1872 eleven of the burgh schools, now under the management of the school board, were scheduled as higher-class schools, and school boards were empowered, subject to the approval of the Department, to convert any of the schools under their management into higher-class public schools. By an Act passed in 1878, the application of the school fund was authorised for the purposes of these schools. In Scotland, therefore, there was no distinction between elementary and secondary education, and all forms of education were co-ordinated in existing school boards.

The manner in which this co-ordination was carried out under school boards was very interesting, and much developed during the last few years. The ordinary State-aided board schools, in receipt of Parliamentary grants under the Code had two ascending stages of secondary education. (1) The supplementary courses for those who had passed the elementary stage, and were compelled to remain at school till fourteen years of age. (2) Higher-grade departments might be formed in any Board school for those pupils who, having obtained the merit certificate, desired to carry their education further. These departments were intended as preparatory training for entrancé to higher-class and secondary schools, as well as for carrying forward the education of those who did not intend to embark upon a regular curriculum of study in a higher-class school, but who might intend to leave school between fifteen and sixteen years of age. There had been a remarkable increase in the number of these higher-grade departments from thirty-six in operation in 1902–3 to seventy at the beginning of session 1904. In addition to the ordinary State-aided Board schools in receipt of Parliamentary grants, existing school boards had, as he had already stated, higher-class public schools, where secondary and technical education might be carried to any height. There were thirty-two of such schools under school boards. The schools did not get grants under the day school Code, but they got grants from funds allotted for secondary education, and they received bursars and free scholars from other schools. In addition to these there were continuation classes in centres all over Scotland, which took cognisance of all forms of specialised instruction, from the most elementary to that given in specially selected central institutions, which, according to last year's Education Report, might be described as Industrial Universities. These central institutions were:—1, Dundee Technical Institute; 2, Edinburgh Heriot Watt College; 3, Glasgow and West of Scotland Technical College; 4, Glasgow School of Art; 5, Edinburgh and East of Scotland College of Agriculture; 6, The West of Scotland Agricultural College; and, in process of establishment; 7, Aberdeen Agricultural College. Besides the thirty-two higher-class public schools under school boards, there were twenty-four endowed schools, and thirty-eight schools under voluntary managers, making ninety-four in all, which were under inspection as higher-class schools. These schools had 17,921 children of all ages on the school roll—one half of that number being in the thirty two schools under the management of school boards. Of the total 17,921 children on the roll, 4,551 were under twelve years of age, most probably receiving preparatory training; leaving 13,370 children on the roll twelve years of age and upward. It was obvious that the instruction given in these higher-class schools was of a totally different character from the primary and secondary instruction given in the ordinary State-aided schools, which were the feeders of these higher-class schools; and that these higher-class schools were as much distinct from the ordinary State-aided schools as were the Universities from the higher-class schools. Education in Scotland naturally divided itself into three divisions: (1) the State-aided schools where all primary and secondary education of a kind was carried on; (2) the purely secondary and technical schools; and (3) the Universities. Each of these divisions required different educational qualifications for management. It would be absurd that the 800,000 children on the school registers of State-aided schools should have their whole educational system upset for the sake of co-ordinating and controlling it in the interest of the 13,370 children in the secondary schools with whom there was nothing in common. If co-ordination was to be a principle, why not carry it to its logical conclusion and co-ordinate the whole three divisions; University education as well? Existing school boards had been proceeding in the direction of higher education as fast as—indeed, according to Sir Henry Craik's Report on Higher Education, much faster than—the capacities and circumstances of the pupils would allow. Sir Henry Craik said—

> "One drawback to which the inspectors have frequently adverted as a hindrance to efficiency shows some signs of diminishing. This is the fact that scholars who come to the secondary schools from the primary schools are not always fitted by previous education to take their places in the same class with those who have had the advantage of being trained with a view to higher education. This tendency is found to be largely increased by bursaries and free places, which are provided out of the amount available for secondary education for scholars from primary schools."

Again, speaking on the subject of the growth of over-pressure, Sir Henry said—

> "It remains to be added that by far the most serious feature which the reports of the inspectors reveal is the continued steady growth of over-pressure in the upper classes of many of the secondary schools. Inquiries made in different parts of the country show that, under existing circumstances, it is no uncommon thing for boys, and even for girls, to spend five or six hours nightly on home lessons. It must be obvious that the nervous strain entailed is excessive, and that it cannot fail to react unfavourably on the intellectual no less than on the physical development of at least a certain proportion of the pupils."

These higher-class schools—both the thirty-two under school board management and the sixty-two under authorities other than school boards—were all inspected by inspectors selected by the Department, at a cost of £6,300 for these inspections; and for the leaving certificate examinations. The inspectors conferred with the school authorities as to methods of instruction, and pointed out weaknesses, and showed how defects might be removed. According to Returns for the year 1900–1, these higher-class schools were in receipt of ample funds. They received grants from funds allotted to secondary and technical education of £61,000; from endowments £33,331; from fees (including fees of bursars and free scholars) £85,381; from rates £23,007; or a total of £203,719. This Bill did not propose in any way to touch any of the schools other than those under the management of existing school boards, the new school boards simply coming in place of, and as successors to, existing school boards. Existing school boards could do everything which the new school boards could do under the Bill if existing school boards had the same powers conferred upon them, whilst the whole complications caused by the wider area would be avoided.

The Bill was mainly a Bill of machinery for transferring education from existing school boards to the school boards created by the Bill. The first 24 clauses all had reference to, and were necessitated by, that transference. Clauses 24 to 28 inclusive, which dealt with additional borrowing powers; additional general powers; differential scale of fees; and keeping and audit of school board accounts, could be put in a Bill conferring these powers on existing school boards. Part III. relating to provincial councils for education would apply whether the school boards were the existing school boards, or were the school boards created under the Bill. The same with regard to Part IV. relating to the Education (Scotland) Fund and higher education. Clauses 35 to 40 inclusive would go out, whilst, if desired, Clauses 41 to 47 inclusive could be made to apply to existing school boards. The remaining clauses, excepting Clause 55, would go out. That the Bill was simply one of transference from existing school boards to school boards created under the Bill was shown by the fact that thirty-seven clauses were all connected with, and caused by, that transfer, and only eighteen clauses related to matter of new powers, which could be dealt with by themselves and applied to existing school boards. As he had pointed out, the education would be more efficient under existing school boards, whilst the funds available for education would be the same. The real fact was that the changes of area had been brought about largely at the instance of those who seemed to think that their personal interests might be promoted by the change.

It was fancied by some teachers that the wider area might lead to more lavish expenditure and to an increase in teachers' salaries. That there might be lavish expenditure might be expected, but not necessarily in the way of increase of teachers' salaries. In practice, it would probably be found that, in some cases, it would work out towards lavishness of expenditure, but in other cases, chiefly rural districts, the tendency might be in the reverse direction. Where there was a large populous centre with a large representation on the school board, combined into an education district with agricultural parishes with a large valuation and a small population, no doubt there might be a temptation to increase expenditure if the increase were largely borne by the country parishes. In other cases, where a burgh was formed into an education district with a number of country parishes, the estate factor and the large ratepayers in the parish who might rule the school board might go in for economy, and might not sympathise with the educational aspirations of the townspeople. They all knew the extraordinary effect which the mere proposal of a one penny per pound tax for free libraries produced on some minds. His own decided conviction was that teachers would find that the more their work commended itself to the parents, and to the community in which they taught, and the closer the parents and the community were to the purse-strings, untrammelled by any outside interference, the better would it be for the pecuniary interests of the teacher. It would, in his opinion, deprive the teachers of much public sympathy and support if the idea got abroad that it was in their interest, or through their representations, that the people of parishes and burghs were deprived of the exclusive management of the parish schools.

It was also said by some teachers that the wider area would afford a greater opportunity for promotion. That, however, was an entire mistake. Automatic promotion in an education district might, no doubt, give advancement to teachers whose abilities were of so mediocre a character as not otherwise to secure them promotion. On the other hand, the teacher of enterprise and ability might find that he required to wait for almost a lifetime for promotion in his educational district and that it would probably not be much when it did come. There would necessarily be no promotion for the man at the top. At present, with a thousand school boards in existence, a teacher in any part of Scotland might apply for a vacancy in any other part, excepting perhaps in the case of a few of the larger school boards which, being large, were kept strictly preserved, and which would still be preserved under the Bill. It was found, in practice, that educational talent found its way from the remote Highland parish to the great educational centres in the South. If, however, every educational district was to be kept as a preserve for the promotion of its own teachers, a teacher would necessarily find every other education district closed to him, unless, indeed, he began at the bottom and automatically worked his way up. Automatic promotion might benefit the inferior teacher, but it would spell ruin to the teacher of ability, who would be deprived of the usual incentive to push his work. School boards who were anxious to save the rates would, no doubt, welcome promotion within their district, as promotions could take place without increasing salaries, and simply involve the putting of a new teacher at the bottom of the list.

The wider area was further approved because it was said that the wider area would remove the teacher further from local influence, and protect a teacher against capricious dismissal. Lord Balfour of Burleigh, when Secretary for Scotland, made inquiries into cases of alleged capricious dismissal, with the result that, in his judgment, there were very few of the cases which could not be justified. Nearly all the employees in this country were subject to capricious dismissal on receiving the usual notice. It was a risk which every employee ran, and there was not likely to be much sympathy for teachers under this head of complaint. It was difficult to see how a teacher's position could be comfortable, or the interest of education could be served, if he had not the good-will and sympathy of the people of the locality. It was not practicable that an employer should, in every case, be called on to give reasons justifying every dismissal, even where very substantial reasons might exist. In the case of a school board, a teacher had a greater protection against capricious dismissal than in the case of a private employer of labour. There was first, the protection of the school board as a whole, a majority of whom must concur in the dismissal. Then, if harshly or unjustly treated, a teacher could enlist the sympathy of the parents which, worked up by the teachers' organisation, was more likely to be extended to the teacher (the individual sufferer) than to school board representatives. Probably, in most cases, the wider area would prove to the disadvantage of the teacher. Whilst parish school boards might bear with a teacher, and hesitate to dismiss owing to the local sympathy that might be evoked, a district school board would not have the same influences to fear; and the dismissal might take place even although the school board representatives of the locality might unanimously vote against it. Of course, if the bad influences of a locality were removed from the teacher by the wider area, so might the good influences of the locality unavail when an increase of salary or other preferment was desired.

He had thus dealt at length with the objection said to be entertained by some teachers, but not, as he knew, by all teachers. He had not been able to discover any educational, or even financial, reason for abolishing the parish and burgh area and adopting a county or county district area which was quite unsuitable alike for primary and secondary education. There really could be, and ought to be, no real antagonism between the interest of the parents and the interest of the teachers. They had a common object, the education of the child, and the educational progress of the child would best be promoted by the hearty sympathy and co-operation of the parent with the teacher and the teaching. The removal of that sympathy and co-operation from school work could not make the teaching more pleasant for the teacher. There was one effect of the reduction of the number of school boards from 1,000 to 111, that the new school boards would be much stronger, and would be able to combine more easily against the teachers' combination. However, that was a matter which might be left to experience to settle. As a rule, changes did not work out to all the advantages which the promoters of the change expected. The evils of an existing system were ever present, for they were daily experienced, but the evils of a new system were not present to the mind, but had to be learned by experience. There was one point referred to by the Lord-Advocate regarding the grants given for education which the different local authorities were claiming to retain. When the discussion on this Bill was going on last year, Lord Dunedin, when Secretary for Scotland, stated that there were only two men in the House who understood these grants. Lord Dunedin referred to himself as one; and to him (Mr. Caldwell) as the other. He must say, he was not surprised at the imperfect statement which the Lord-Advocate made as to these grants. The subject was a somewhat complicated one, and he feared it would not be possible in the very few minutes left to explain the matter clearly. He would only say that prior to 1888 certain local grants-in-aid both for England and Scotland, appeared on the Estimates, and that in connection with the Local Government Legislation in 1888 a certain proportion of probate duty (now estate duty), and certain licences were transferred to Local Taxation Accounts, to which these grants were to be transferred, a further amount being added with the view of making personalty contribute to local taxation. In the case of England, England's share was given wholly in relief of rates; but in the case of Scotland, Scotland's share (after providing for the Votes transferred) was wholly applied to the relief of school fees, and, with a further sum of £40,000 given in 1900, education in Scotland had been in receipt of a fee grant of 12s. per child from moneys which, in the case of England, went to relieve the rates. In 1892, when England got 10s. per child of a fee grant, Scotland, although provided with 12s. out of Scotch money, became entitled to an equivalent of a similar amount. Parliament considered that now was the time to recoup the local rating authorities for what, in the interest of education, they had given up in 1889, and, after making certain prior fixed charges, including £60,000 per annum for secondary education and £30,000 per annum for University education, the Act of 1892 directed the balance to be apportioned among the local rating authorities, who had been in receipt of it ever since. The amount of this balance was estimated at £182,000 this year, and increased with the school attendance. There was absolutely no justification for taking from local authorities any portion of that amount, but it was now on the stroke of midnight, and he did not mean to talk the Second Reading out.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

ADJOURNMENT.

*THE PARLIMENTARY SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Sir A. ACLAND-HOOD, Somersetshire, Wellington): I beg to move that the House do now adjourn.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn." *(Sir A. Acland-Hood.)*

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs said he would like to take advantage of this opportunity of asking the Patronage Secretary whether he could give the House any idea when the post of Junior Lord of the Treasury was going to be filled. This matter was becoming a public scandal. This office of public profit under the Crown had now been without an occupant for two or three months. He had put a Question to the Prime Minister on the subject and the Answer was that it was under consideration. Was, at this moment, the post of Junior Lord of the Treasury really vacant? That was a matter on which there was a difference of opinion. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman the Patronage Secretary, with his usual lucidity and practical experience, would give the House some information on the point. If Mr. Gerald Loder was not at this moment Junior Lord of the Treasury, when was the post going to be filled up? Were the Government going to make a declaration in the face of the whole country that they were unable to find a safe seat for Mr. Gerald Loder or some other supporter. He presumed that the right hon. Gentleman the Patronage Secretary must have been looking up Whitaker's Almanack to see where he could find a constituency where the Government had a majority of 2,000 or 3,000. The Government were not treating the House fairly in this matter. It was not fair to the Patronage Secretary himself. They all recognised the splendid service he rendered in the House, and the amount of anxiety he had in keeping his Party together at the present time. This was a stage when the right hon. Gentleman ought not to be short-handed in his staff and, from considerations of humanity, the right hon. Gentleman ought not to be so overworked. He should have a full staff, for he required more scouting done than at any previous period in the history of the present Administration. It was probably true that the general election was so close at hand that the right hon. Gentleman was willing to perform this extra duty so as not to put any constituency to the trouble of an election. If that were the case the right hon. Gentleman ought to tell the House so. It seemed to him that the sooner this post was filled the better it would be for the Government, and he could not see any reason for delay. Were the Government afraid of a by-election, or had they appointed some Gentleman to the post and so created a feeling of dissatisfaction on the part of others of their followers?

MR. BLACK (Banffshire) said he desired to associate himself with his hon. friend in his wish for further information in regard to this very important matter. Were the Government considering the appointment of a Scotsman to this vacant post? That was the constitutional usage. There was, for instance, the hon. Member for Partick who would make a most suitable occupant of the office. Would the Government not give him a look in? There might be reasons, which it would not be becoming in him to mention, why the Government should not; but there was the hon. Baronet the Member for East Renfrew who had been so consistent in his support of the Government. He hoped, in any event, the Government, in this matter, was determined to adhere to constitutional usage and appoint a Scotsman.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN (Kilkenny, N.) said he disagreed altogether with the hon. Member for Banffshire that Scotland should receive this appointment. Everybody knew that the Government was more shaky in Scotland than in England; and it was highly desirable that they, in Ireland, who were philanthropists with tender hearts, should come to the assistance of the Government in this delicate situation. There was no excuse whatever for this vacancy. They had in Ireland thirteen representatives, supporters of the Government, who were lawyers. Since he came into the House he had noticed that they made themselves extremely disagreeable on the other side of the House until they were taken into the Administration. Nearly every Irish Member of the Administration had been a keen critic of his predecessor. There was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Belfast, who applied his critical and analytical mind to the problems of the Army, and he became Minister of War. Then, the Ulster Tory Party had not got what they desired, although they had been unsparing critics of the Government. The hon. Member for North Antrim had raised five votes against the Government. Surely he deserved some recognition from the Government. The hon. Member for North Antrim would be satisfied with a very small place; but, now that the chance of the Government retaining power for a much longer period was diminishing, the hon. Gentleman might meet with the same fate as the hon. Member for Brighton, because he understood there was not much chance of his being re-elected. There was the hon. Member for Belfast. He represented the Tory democracy, and he ought to have a show! There was no excuse for the Government keeping this vacancy open in view of the many candidates who believed themselves qualified to give their services. For his part, he was sure that hon. Members on the Irish Benches would be glad, in co-operation with Scotch Members, to do something to get the Government out of the difficulty. They invited some explanation from the Patronage Secretary, and the suggestions they had offered, he was certain, would be useful to the right hon. Gentleman.

*Sir A. ACLAND-HOOD said that, of course, he could only speak with the permission of the House. He had already expressed his views on this subject without undue warmth, and at no unnecessary length. He could only say that, strongly as he held these opinions, he would not at that period of the night weary the House by making a further statement.

The right hon. Gentleman then walked out of the Chamber amid ironical Opposition cheers.

Mr. WHITLEY (Halifax) said he thought the right hon. Gentleman had not treated the House with his usual courtesy. This was the only opportunity they had of obtaining information on current important questions. He looked upon this matter from rather a different point of view than that of his hon. friend. He regarded it as a matter of economy.

At this point Mr. Swift MacNeill, amid ironical Opposition cheers, left his usual bench, crossed the floor of the House, and took a seat on the empty Treasury bench.

Mr WHITLEY, continuing, said that when the Estimates came on he would see whether the salary for this post could not be removed from the Vote, for obviously it was not necessary to vote the money since it had been so clearly proved that the post could be left vacant for so long a period. He could not believe that there was not a constituency throughout the length and breadth of the kingdom which could be trusted to elect a supporter of the Government, and he hoped that the protest which had been made would be continued until the House was treated in a better manner.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) said he rose to support the Chair. It was a peculiar thing that this question should be discussed from the Treasury bench by a private Member—the question of the salary of an office which the Prime Minister had allowed to be so long vacant. He had looked into the precedents and found that it was in accordance with constitutional practice, except on rare occasions, that one of the Lords of the Treasury should always be a Member for Scotland. When Mr. Anstruther resigned in 1903 on his appointment as a Director of the Suez Canal there was no Scotch seat vacant. When Ministers absented themselves from the Treasury bench, this House, so far as they could do it, was degraded into a farce. He believed that this was the first time that an Irish Nationalist Member had addressed the House from the Treasury bench in defence of law and order. He was there, with his colleagues, to support the Chair. What was the position in which the Government, whose paramount duty it was to support the Chair, had placed the House? He would not show the slightest disrespect to the Chair, and especially not for its present occupant. But let them look at the position in which, as the mouthpiece of the House, Mr. Deputy-Speaker had been left by the Government! He said without fear of contradiction that, in the present state of the House, if they chose to impute any bad motives to the Government and violated the rules of Parliamentary procedure—if they used language which infringed on the order of Parliamentary debate—Mr. Deputy-Speaker would ask them to withdraw, and if Mr. Deputy-Speaker named them on refusal, where was the Minister who would move their expulsion from the House? The Prime Minister had left the House of Commons in a condition in which anything disrespectful might be said; and there was no one who had respect for the Chair who could officially defend the Chair. He held that, with some knowledge of history, since the Union there had been no Administration which had been guilty of such moral turpitude as the present. No Treasury bench had ever been packed with so many relatives who had been slaves to the Prime Minister at the expense of the community. Noah's Ark was a most respectable institution, it only floated on a waste of waters; but this Administration only rested on a waste of relatives.

Mr. MOONEY (Dublin County, S.) said that that night, for the first time, they had to complain of the way the Patronage Secretary had replied to a very simple Question. That Question was whether the office of Junior Lord of the Treasury was vacant, and they were entitled to have an Answer. Two different statements had been made in regard to the subject——

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTSON (Hackney, S.) called attention to the fact that there were not forty Members present.

Mr. MOONEY, on a point of order, asked whether the hon. Member was entitled to challenge a count on the Motion for the Adjournment.

*Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: He is in order.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL, who had returned to the corner seat below the gangway on the Opposition side and speaking seated and with his hat on, said that he did not in the slightest degree wish to challenge Mr. Deputy-Speaker's ruling; but, with great respect, he submitted that there was no precedent for a count on an occasion like the present. The Prime Minister or his representative should be present at such discussions when Questions of public interest might be asked. He observed that the hon. Member for Hackney had now fled, like his chief the Prime Minister. Might he ask Mr. Deputy-Speaker for his ruling on the point raised. He did not know of a single precedent for it in their whole Parliamentary history. He was sure that the gentlemen at the Table would instruct Mr. Deputy-Speaker.

*Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER counted the number of hon. Members present and, declaring that there were only thirty-six [Loud Opposition cries of "Forty-two"], he said that the Question was that the House stood now Adjourned.

The House was Adjourned at half after Twelve of the clock till To-morrow.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 9th May, 1905.

INTRODUCED.

Francis, Lord Bishop of Oxford, was (in the usual manner) introduced.

SAT FIRST.

The Lord Kenmare (*E. Kenmare*) sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Gamble's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. Order of the Day for the Second Reading read. Counsel called in. Witnesses examined. Moved, that the Bill be now read 2^{a}. The same was agreed to. Bill read 2^{a} accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [H.L.]. Order of the Day for the Second Reading read. Counsel called in. Moved, that the Bill be now read $2.^{a}$ The same was agreed to. Bill read 2^{a} accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

Lautour's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. Order of the Day for the Second Reading read. Counsel called in. Witnesses examined. Moved, that the Bill be now read 2^{a}. The same was agreed to. Bill read 2^{a} accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—North Sussex Gas; Woolwich Borough Council.

And also the Certificates that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with; Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 1) [H.L.]; Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 1) [H.L.]; Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 2) [H.L.].

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Alexandra Park and Palace Bill [H.L.]. Reported, with Amendments.

Hythe Corporation Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 21st of February and the 31st of March last discharged, and Bill committed.

Accrington Corporation Bill. Read 2^{a}, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Donovan's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. A witness ordered to attend on the Second Reading of the Bill.

Metropolitan Electric Supply Company (Acton District) Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 27th of February and 9th of March last, discharged, and Bill committed.

Grangemouth Waterworks and Burgh Extension Order Confirmation Bill. Brought from the Commons.

Heckmondwike Improvement Bill; South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Company Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1^{a}; and referred to the Examiners.

Marylebone Chapels Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to.

Bangor (County Down) Water and Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Matlock Bath Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]; Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Formby Township Bill [H.L.]; Humber Conservancy Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord O'Hagan be proposed to the

House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Chelmsford; read, and agreed to.

Grangemouth Waterworks and Burgh Extension Order Confirmation Bill. Read 1ª; to be printed; and (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899), deemed to have been read 2ª (The Lord Kintore (*E. Kintore*)), and reported from the Committee. (No. 63.)

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill [H.L.] (No. 64). A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, the Electric Lighting (Scotland) Act, 1890, and the Electric Lighting (Scotland) Act, 1902, relating to Airdrie, Coatbridge, and Cults and District.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill [H.L.] (No. 65). A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Brentford, Croydon (Rural), Durham (Districts), Eastbourne (Willingdon Extension), Gravesend (Extension to Northfleet), Kingsbury, Old Windsor, and Wimborne and District.

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.] (No. 66). A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Tramways Act, 1870, relating to Bradford Corporation Tramways, Gorton Urban District Council Tramways, Keighley Corporation Tramways, Leeds Corporation Tramways, Liverpool Corporation Tramways Extensions, and Pudsey Corporation Tramways.

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.] (No. 67). A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Tramways Act, 1870, relating to Aberavon Tramways, Colchester Corporation Tramways, King's Norton and Northfield Urban District Council Tramway, Luton Corporation Tramways, Portobello and Musselburgh Tramways (Amendment), and Southampton Corporation Tramways.

Gas Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.] (No. 68). A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Aberystwyth Gas, Haslemere Gas, Hayling Island Gas, Sandiacre Gas, and Stanford-le-Hope Gas, and

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.] (No. 69). A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Dorking Water, Maidenhead Water, Tavistock Gas, Wey Valley Water, and Ystalyfera Gas.

Were presented by the Lord Privy Seal (*M. Salisbury*); read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners.

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill. House in Committee (according to order); Bill reported without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Thursday next.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 3365. United States (Hawaii);
No. 3366. Russia (Batoum).

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

FRENCH NEUTRALITY IN THE FAR EAST.

*Earl SPENCER: My Lords, I desire to ask the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a Question on a matter of considerable interest and importance—namely, whether he can give the House any information as to the alleged irregularities in regard to the coaling and provisioning of the Russian fleet in territorial waters of the French Far Eastern colonies.

*The SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of Lansdowne): My Lords, I am indebted to the French Embassy for the information which enables me to reply to the Question of the noble Earl. The facts as described to me are as follows: When the French Government became aware that the Russian squadron was within Kamranh Bay a representation was at once made at St. Petersburg, with the result that instructions were sent from St. Petersburg by telegram to Admiral Rozhdestvensky desiring him to leave that harbour, and he did so at once. Subsequently the Russian squadron was reported to have arrived at another harbour upon the French coast of Indo-China, a place known, I believe, as Hon-kohe Bay. Admiral de Jonquières, the admiral in command of the French squadron, was sent to this place to report, and reported that the Russian squadron was, in effect, off Hon-kohe Bay, but not within territorial waters. It appears, however, that the Governor of French Indo-China, who had received special instructions from his Government that he was to take all possible steps to secure respect for the neutrality of French waters, thereupon sent the French Resident at the town nearest Hon-kohe with directions to invite the Russian squadron to proceed on its journey. This official received from the Russian admiral an assurance that the squadron would sail from Hon-kohe on May 3rd. I am not able to say whether its departure actually took place on that date. The only other point which I may perhaps mention is this. It has been stated that while the Russian squadron was within the waters of Kamranh Bay it received assistance from various French officials on the spot. I understand that Kamranh Bay is an extremely remote and out-of-the-way place, and that there are no French officials there; there are, I believe, two French residents altogether on the shores of the bay, and they are civilians holding concessions from the French Government, and not officials at all.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION BILL [H.L.].

House in Committee (according to Order).

[The Earl of ONSLOW in the Chair.]

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to.

Clause 3—

LORD NEWTON moved an Amendment providing that proceedings for the recovery of compensation should not, without the leave of a County Court Judge, be commenced until after the expiration of twenty-eight days from the date when the notice of accident had been given. The object of his Amendment was to give the employer time to consider the claim before proceedings were commenced against him. It was plain that no injustice could happen to the workman, because, in a case where there were special reasons for proceedings being commenced earlier, the County Court Judge was enabled to authorise them. The sub-section would, if his Amendment was adopted, read as follows—

> "Proceedings for the recovery of compensation under this Act shall not, without the leave of a County Court, be commenced until after the expiration of twenty-eight days from the date when the notice of accident has been given, and shall not be maintainable unless—"

and so on.

Amendment moved—

> "In Clause 3, page 2, line 35, after the word 'be' to insert the words "commenced until after the expiration of twenty-eight days from the date when the notice of accident has been given and shall not be.'"—(*Lord Newton.*)

LORD BELPER: My Lords, His Majesty's Government are entirely in sympathy with the view that proceedings should not be taken within less than a reasonable time, in order to give the employer an opportunity, if possible, of coming to an arrangement; but the Amendment is not in the proper place. If it is inserted here, as proposed by the noble Lord, it would have this effect. The claim is part of the proceedings, and therefore it would prevent the claim for compensation being made for twenty-eight days after the accident. That, I know, is not the intention of my noble friend. I would suggest to him that he should move to amend Subsection (c) by inserting, after the word "commenced," the words "not less than twenty-eight days or more than" and leaving out the word "within." That would have the effect which the noble Lord desires without being open to the objection I have stated, namely, that of preventing a claim being made for twenty-eight days. If the noble Lord adopted my suggestion, sub-section (c) would then read—

> "(c) Proceedings to enforce the claim have been commenced not less than twenty-eight days or more than three months after the claim for compensation has been made."

LORD DAVEY said he had no opinion to offer with regard to the Amendment. He rose merely to express his surprise at one sentence which had fallen from the noble Lord in charge of the Bill. He referred to the sentence in which the noble Lord stated that the claim was part of the proceedings. In the old Act there was great confusion between the claim and the proceedings, and a good deal of litigation had taken place upon it. He had thought it was one of the merits of this Bill that it separated the claim from the proceedings, and settled that question upon which so much litigation had taken place. If the noble Lord would look at the Bill he would see that that was so, because proceedings were not to be taken unless a claim was first made. The claim preceded the proceedings, and was not part of the proceedings.

LORD BELPER: It has been held that the claim is part of the proceedings. At all events, the object of the noble Lord is quite as well effected by inserting the words in sub-section (c), and they come in more properly there.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): I understand that Lord Newton does not persist in his Amendment on this sub-section, and I think it had better be discussed on its merits when it is moved to sub-section (c).

Amendment, by leave of the Committee, withdrawn.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON, who had an Amendment on the Paper to Clause 3, said the Amendment standing in the name of his noble and learned friend behind him, Lord Davey, had the same object in view, and, as he preferred the Amendment of the noble and learned Lord to that standing in his own name, he would not proceed with his Amendment but would support that moved by Lord Davey.

LORD DAVEY moved an Amendment with the object of extending the time during which notice of an accident must be given from six to fourteen days. He thought that, considering a notice in writing was a condition precedent to the right of commencing proceedings, six days was too short a period. In the first place, the serious nature of many accidents was not found out until after six days had elapsed. In the matter of internal injuries that was especially the case. He knew of a recent case in which the person injured went about his work in the usual way, but found out a week afterwards that he had suffered more injury than he had anticipated; he was, indeed, incapacitated. The injured man might be in an unconscious state for a long time, or it might happen that he was unmarried and lived in lodgings, and he might not in that case be in a position to get the notice given within the time. It was quite true that a County Court Judge had power to enlarge this time, but he did not think that was quite a sufficient answer. It really did not matter very much, so far as the employer was concerned, whether the period was six or ten days because the claim for compensation was made afterwards, but he thought it would be better to put fourteen days in the Bill.

Amendment moved—

> "In Clause 3, page 2, line 38, to leave out the word 'six' and insert the word 'fourteen.'"—(*Lord Davey.*)

LORD BELPER: The proposed limit of six days, with which this Amendment deals, was made in consequence of very grave complaints by employers of the law as it stood. The Act provides that notice of the accident must be lodged "as soon as practicable," but the decisions given with regard to that have led to great confusion, and complaints were made before the Committee by employers as to the operation of those words. After full consideration the Committee decided that it would be better to substitute some definite period, and the point, of course, which has to be considered is what that period should be. The statement made in evidence by the employers was that in a great many cases, owing to the delay in giving notice, they had been put in a false position. In mines underground the conditions in which the work is carried on vary so very much from day to day that it is most important, in order to afford employers an opportunity of inquiring into an accident, that the notice should be given at the earliest possible date. There is another strong reason. It was shown that in a great many trivial accidents, such as wounds and cuts, if proper precautions had been taken immediately, such as an employer would insist on if notice of the accident was given, the injury would very quickly heal, while if any length of time elapsed before notice was given the accident might, through neglect, become more serious. On that ground also it was thought extremely desirable that the employer should have notice of trivial accidents as soon as possible after they take place. The Committee and the Government have been pressed very much to make the period a shorter one even than six days. The majority of the evidence given before the Committee was in favour of limiting the time to three days; and six days was finally decided upon by the Committee as a reasonable time and somewhat as a compromise between two contending views. Under those circumstances the Government feel that it would be safer to adhere to the six days, it being quite clear that application can be made to the Court, in any case where the injured person has failed to give the notice owing to any particular circumstance, to allow the claim to proceed. I regret I cannot accept the Amendment.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON could not agree with the views expressed by Lord Belper. It seemed to him that six days was far too short a period. His noble and learned friend Lord Davey had given numerous instances in which such a notice would be too short. It was easy to find others. Take, for instance, a case of death. The death of the head of a family entirely disorganised the family, and it was quite possible that the widow, being utterly ignorant of the law, might not realise the situation and fail to give the notice within the required period. Personally, he thought the phrase in the original Act better in this respect than the Amendment proposed in this Bill; but, accepting the idea that there should be a time limit, he could not but think that the time proposed in the Bill was unnecessarily short. In London there were no postal facilities on Sunday, and that might in itself limit the opportunity of giving notice in the Metropolis to five days. The noble Lord had quoted the desire of the employers, but the Government ought also to consider the desire and the opinion of those who were employed.

LORD BELPER: I quoted the employers as wishing to have the period much shorter than six days.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON said that such a proposal as that would make the Bill ridiculous. If his noble and learned friend decided to divide the House he would support him.

*EARL SPENCER: The noble Lord in charge of the Bill said that when an accident took place it was important that the employer should know of it as soon as possible. We all agree as to that; but I think the arguments put forward by my noble and learned friend behind me and by the noble Marquess who has just sat down are overwhelming as to the necessity of greater time being allowed than that provided in the clause. If it is so necessary for the employer to have the notice speedily, surely that ought to be met by some other means. We are dealing now with what is just and right for the men who seek compensation, and I do not think the argument of the noble Lord meets that in any way.

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD trusted His Majesty's Government would reconsider this matter. It was the wish of all that justice should be meted out under this Bill to both employers and employed. They were dealing with a sick, and probably an ignorant man, and if the notice which he sent in was wrongly framed, he would not have time under the proposed limit to send in an amended notice, and his claim could not be supported thereafter in Court. Fourteen days was surely reasonable, and it would be much more satisfactory to the workman that he should have full time in which to frame his notice.

Lord BELPER: My noble and learned friend Lord James seems to be under a misapprehension as to what the Amendment deals with. It does not deal with the claim at all. A very much longer period is given in which to make the claim. This is merely the notice of the accident. In the great majority of cases notice of the accident will be given immediately after the accident. I must point out that although the workman has to be considered, it is of the utmost importance to the employer that he should have notice in such time as will enable him to make inquiries and be satisfied that the accident has occurred and learn the circumstances of it. The noble Marquess opposite thinks it ridiculous to limit the notice to six days.

The Marquess of RIPON: What I said was that it would be very ridiculous to limit it to less than six days.

Lord BELPER: The Committee were strongly impressed with the view that the notice should be given as soon after the accident as possible, and the fixing of six days was a concession to the members on the Committee who objected to a shorter limit. I am not authorised to accept the Amendment as proposed.

Lord HENEAGE held that it was in the case of small accidents that time was more wanted. A workman who was slightly injured knew he could get no compensation for the first fourteen days after the accident, and therefore took no notice of it; but he might subsequently find that the accident was much more serious than he at first supposed, but the time would have expired in which to give notice. He thought an extension of the period to ten days would be a fair compromise.

The LORD CHANCELLOR: The noble Lord has not appreciated what has been pointed out by my noble friend who is in charge of the Bill. The noble Lord is dealing with the claim for compensation. This is the notice of the accident, and has nothing whatever to do with the claim for compensation.

Lord HENEAGE: But you cannot make a claim for compensation unless notice has been given.

Lord BELPER: I assure the noble Lord that is not the case. Notice must be given in all cases where there is an accident. There may be a great many accidents in which there will be no claim for compensation at all. The period for making the claim is a long one, but this requirement with regard to notice is to enable the employer to know of the accident as soon after it has occurred as possible.

Lord DAVEY said the noble Lord was quite correct in stating that this was not the claim for compensation, but it was a condition precedent to the claim, and he could not help thinking, having regard to the ignorance of the rather complicated procedure created by these Acts which existed among the working classes, that some longer time than six days was required. He was afraid, if the noble Lord did not see his way to make any concession, he would have to trouble the House to divide on the Amendment.

*The Earl of JERSEY said the words in the sub-section were entirely governed by the words in the earlier part of the clause, viz.—

> "Shall not, without the leave of a County Court, be maintainable unless," etc.

If any circumstance arose which would justify a case being taken, although notice had not been given within six days, the person who suffered could apply to the County Court Judge and get permission. He thought that in those circumstances the provision with regard to the period in which notice should be given was a reasonable one.

Lord ALVERSTONE said the words in the Act, "as soon as practicable after the happening thereof," had been found to work badly. It had been found to be important in the interests of justice that the employer should have early notice of an accident. He thought that what his noble friend Lord Jersey had pointed out really met the difficulty. His experience convinced him that the period for notice of the accident ought to be a short one. It did not in any way limit the right of a man to bring a claim for compensation, but it was of vital importance that employers should not have a suggestion of an accident put upon them without an opportunity of inquiring into it.

Lord JAMES of HEREFORD: May I ask the Lord Chief Justice what he means by saying that the absence of notice does not limit the right of a man to bring his claim? If he does not give notice he cannot bring his claim.

On Question, "That the word 'six' stand part of the clause," their Lordships divided:—Contents, 56; Not-Contents, 18.

CONTENTS.

Halsbury, E. (*L. Chancellor.*)
Marlborough, D.
Lansdowne, M.

Pembroke and Montgomery, E. (*Lord Steward.*)
Clarendon, E. (*L. Chamberlain.*)
Carnwath, E.
Cawdor, E.
Denbigh, E.
Ducie, E.
Haddington, E.
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Jersey, E.
Lauderdale, E.
Onslow, E.
Rosse, E.
Waldegrave, E. [*Teller.*]
Yarborough, E.

Churchill, V. [*Teller.*]

Colville of Culross, V.
Cross, V.
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Hutchinson, V. (*E. Donoughmore.*)
Knutsford, V.
Sidmouth, V.

Bangor, L. Bp.
Ely, L. Bp.
Oxford, L. Bp.

Alverstone, L.
Belhaven and Stenton, L.
Belper, L.
Biddulph, L.
Carysfort, L. (*E. Carysfort.*)
Clifford of Chudleigh, L.
Congleton, L.
Digby, L.
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Glanusk, L.
Hylton, L.
Kilmarnock, L. (*E. Erroll.*)
Lawrence, L.
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Moncrieff, L.
Mostyn, L.
Napier, L.
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Ranfurly, L. (*E. Ranfurly.*)
Ravensworth, L.
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Windsor, L.
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NOT-CONTENTS.

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Camperdown, E.
Carrington, E.
Chesterfield, E. [*Teller.*]
Spencer, E.

Gordon, V. (E. *Aberdeen.*)

Burghclere, L.
Davey, L.
Denman, L. [*Teller.*]
Heneage, L.
James, L.

Monkswell, L.
O'Hagan, L.
Sandhurst, L.
Shuttleworth, L.
Stanmore, L.
Tweedmouth, L.
Wenlock, L.

Lord NEWTON moved to leave out "three months," and to substitute "six weeks" in sub-section (b), which ran as follows—

> (*b*) a claim for compensation with respect to the accident has been made in writing within three months after the happening thereof, or in case of death within six months from the time of death; and

The object of this Amendment was to reduce the period during which a claim for compensation was to be made. In short, it was to do away, if possible, with the uncertainty attached to these proceedings. This, of course, did not refer to the County Court proceedings, but to the intimation to the employer that the workman proposed to claim compensation. He thought the arguments brought forward by the noble Lord in charge of the Bill in support of the retention of the period of six days applied in this case. It was clear, in the case of coal mines, etc., that, for purposes of evidence and for other reasons there should not be any unnecessary delay, and it seemed only fair that the employer should know as soon as possible whether he would have to meet a claim for compensation or not.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 3, page 2, line 40, to leave out the words 'three months' and insert the words 'six weeks'"—(*Lord Newton.*)

LORD BELPER: I am not able to admit that the arguments which I made use of in support of the six days notice apply also with regard to the time for the claim. The Committee considered what would be the most reasonable time to allow for claims, and they decided on three months, and six months in the case of death. I do not think this provision is unreasonable. It stands in a totally different position from that of notice of accident. The employer would have full notice of the accident beforehand, and ample time for inquiry. There are obvious reasons why the time for the claim should not be fixed at too early a period, and I am not prepared to accept the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave of the Committee, withdrawn.

Clause 3 agreed to.

Clause 4 .

LORD DAVEY moved to omit from Clause 4 (sub-contracting), Sub-section 3, excepting from the operation of the clause cases where the accident occurred elsewhere than on the premises. The principal object he had in view was to elicit some explanation from the Government as to the meaning of the clause. Giving the best attention to it he could, he had not been able to grasp the meaning or effect of it. This was a good illustration of the inconvenience of discussing a question of this kind piecemeal. Section 4 of the principal Act, of which Clause 4 of this Bill was an Amendment, dealt with the question of the liability of undertakers to workmen employed by sub-contractors. It was a very confused and badly-framed clause, and a new clause to the same effect had been substituted for it. The provision in the principal Act was this—

"This Act shall not apply to any contract with any person for the execution by or under such contractor of any work which is merely ancillary or incidental to and is no part or process in the trade or business carried on by such undertakers respectively."

Lord Newton.

The meaning of this provision was that if a person employed a sub-contractor to build a warehouse for instance, or to do some work which was not his own work but was required for the purpose of his business, in that case these liabilities should not apply. The Government now proposed to add these words to the sub-section he had read—

"Nor in any case where the accident occurred elsewhere than on or in or about such premises, work, or building as are mentioned in Section 7 of this Act."

In other words, he supposed it was only to apply where the accident happened on the premises where the work was done. But if they looked at Section 7 they would find that it consisted of two sub-sections. He wanted to know whether the sub-section which he proposed to strike out comprised both of those sub-sections; that was to say, whether it meant about any premises, work, or building unless the nature of the employment required that the workman should be engaged elsewhere, or did it confine the operation of Clause 4 entirely to the actual premises, work, or building where the trade was carried on. He was unable to express an opinion upon it. If it meant to refer to both sub-sections of Section 7, then it was unnecessary; and if it did not, he would be glad if the Government would kindly tell him what their reason was for confining the workmen to the premises on which the business was carried on for the purposes of this section, and this section only. Why was, say, an engineer sent to repair an engine at some railway station or elsewhere, where it might happen to be, deprived of the benefit of Section 4? He could not see how it affected the question; and if it was intended to confine the operation of Section 4 to the particular premises where the trade was carried on, he would be glad to know the reason for it.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 4, page 3, line 39, to leave out Sub-section (3)."—(*Lord Davey.*)

LORD BELPER: I can assure the noble and learned Lord that I feel much more than he does the difficulty of some of the points with which we have to deal in a complicated Bill of this kind. The sub-section which the noble and learned Lord proposes to leave out expressly protects the undertaker from liability in the case where the sub-contractor's workmen are employed away from the premises. The object of that is that in large works, where a number of sub-contractors necessarily have to be employed, and where a great quantity of the work has to be prepared in the workshops of the sub-contractors, the undertaker shall not be held responsible for any accident arising in those shops, over which he cannot possibly have control. As far as I understand, the Amendment of the noble and learned Lord would cut out that part of the clause, and would, therefore, make the undertaker responsible for work over which he could not have any control. The Committee thought it would not be fair, if the Act should be extended to works away from the premises, that the undertaker should be made liable for compensation to the sub-contractor's workmen.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: Will the noble Lord be good enough to tell us who will be liable for compensation in such a case?

LORD BELPER: The sub-contractor.

LORD DAVEY said he now understood the view of the Government. He wished to say one word as to the policy of the clause as explained by the noble Lord. He was at present unable to see why his not being on the premises should make any difference to the right of the workman employed by the sub-contractor who had contracted to do part of the work undertaken by the principal contractor. He was employed at the place where he was told to do the work. Take, for instance, the case of the sub-contractor to a builder. The builder had undertaken to erect a warehouse, and he let out the painting of it. The sub-contractor who did that work did it on the premises, and if the workman met with an accident during his employment he had a remedy both against the principal contractor and the sub-contractor; but in the case of the plumbing work, which the builder might also have given out to a sub-contractor, part of that work would be done on, and part off, the premises. The pipes would be made off the premises, and the fixing of them, of course, would be done on the premises, but the workman of the plumber—the sub-contractor—if he was employed off the premises in making the pipes, would not have the benefit of this clause, but his fellow-workman who was employed for the time being in fixing the pipes at the premises would have that benefit. What relation did it bear to the workman whether he was employed on one sort of work or another? Yet it made all the difference to him whether he had the liability of the principal contractor to rely upon, as well as that of the sub-contractor by whom he was immediately employed. It seemed to him that in this clause they were placing two workmen who were in precisely the same condition relative to their work, in a very different position as regards their right to compensation. He could not help thinking that the distinction made by this clause was not a sound one. The noble Lord said that the undertaker, if the work was done on the premises, could superintend it, but when an undertaker gave work out to a sub-contractor he did not superintend it. That duty was done by the sub-contractor. If the sub-section in question remained in the Bill it would create an inequality between workmen of the same class, and would apply the clause in a way in which the other clauses were not made to apply. He would like the noble Lord to consider whether the clause did not require redrafting.

LORD BELPER: If the noble and learned Lord will put the point before me, the question shall be considered in the Standing Committee.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: The question of form only?

LORD BELPER: Certainly.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: The question of form can be considered in the Standing Committee, but the question of substance your Lordships will, of course, decide; and the question of substance is a simple one. The person who employs the workman is the person who ought to compensate him if he is injured in that employment.

Amendment, by leave of the Committee, withdrawn.

LORD DAVEY moved an Amendment to repeal the words "is merely ancillary or incidental to and" in Section 4 of the principal Act. It was, he said, provided in Section 4 that the Act should not apply to any contract with any person for the execution by or under such contract of any work which was merely ancillary or incidental to and was no part or process in the trade or business carried on by the undertaker. Their Lordships would observe the very vague character of the words "merely ancillary or incidental to," and they had given rise already to some litigation. They appeared to him, looking at the clause in the original Act, to be absolutely unnecessary. The best explanation of them was in the subsequent words, which were tolerably clear, "and is no part or process in the trade or business carried on." The words he proposed to delete added nothing to the sense of the section, but by their vagueness invited litigation. It was really a drafting Amendment.

Amendment moved—

"To insert the following new sub-section: 'In the principal Act, Section 4, the words "is merely ancillary or incidental to and" are hereby repealed.'"—(*Lord Davey.*)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: I am not at all certain that if we were making this law anew I should not agree with the noble and learned Lord, but if his Amendment is adopted all the cost and expense incurred and learned arguments used on these words will be thrown away. Inasmuch as we have arrived at a judicial determination of what the words mean I should be sorry to see them dropped now. We should have a new line of interpretation if they were struck out.

LORD DAVEY was afraid they could not take much comfort to themselves from the decisions that had been given, which were to the effect that the words must be construed according to the circumstances of each case.

Amendment, by leave of the Committee, withdrawn.

Clauses 4, 5 and 6 agreed to.

LORD NEWTON moved to amend the new section dealing with the detention of ships, which it was proposed in the Bill to add to the principal Act, by inserting the word "foreign" before "ship." To reassure the Committee he might explain that this was not a tariff reform Amendment. It might be assumed that the intention of the Bill was that the power to detain a ship should be confined to foreign ships only. This view appeared to be borne out by paragraph 268 in the Report of the Departmental Committee, and the various references to the Merchant Shipping Act only dealt with the case of foreign ships; but under the clause it appeared to him that the provision might apply to British ships as well as foreign, and in order to make it clear he suggested the insertion of the word "foreign."

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 6A, page 4, line 23, after the word 'any' to insert the word 'foreign.'"—(*Lord Newton.*)

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: I would point out that Clause 6A, which the noble Lord now proposes to amend, is not a separate clause, but is part of Clause 6, which has already been passed.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES: That is so. Perhaps the noble Lord will bring his Amendment up in Standing Committee.

LORD NEWTON: Why cannot it be taken now?

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: Because the noble Lord proposes to amend a portion of Clause 6, which has already been passed.

Clause 7.

LORD DAVEY moved to omit the words "by the undertakers" from the second line of the new section which it was proposed to substitute for Section 7 of the principal Act. He said the object of this sub-section was to define the employments to which the Act was to apply, and not in any way to define the persons by whom the compensation was to be paid. The words "by the undertakers" were absolutely unnecessary for that purpose, and, more than that, were misleading, and, therefore, mischievous. He thought they must have got in by mistake. The words were misleading because "undertaker" had a special meaning. The term did not mean every employer. A person might be an undertaker as regards work who did not employ a workman at all. Therefore, if the limitation was retained, they would strike out every case in which the workman was employed not by the undertaker but by a sub-contractor. The definition clause seemed to him to have every fault which it was possible for a definition clause to have. The definitions overlapped each other, and were framed on a perfectly different system in each case. Take the case of a railway. In the case of a railway, the owner or lessee of, or person working the railway was the undertaker. Therefore, if a new siding was being made or a new station being built, the railway company would, he presumed, be the undertakers. But, in the case of engineering work, "undertaker" meant the person undertaking the making, laying, altering, repairing, demolishing, or removing. Therefore, in the case of a railway which was being made there were, as it appeared to him, two undertakers under this clause—the railway company and the contractor who was making the railway; and in that case the railway company would be liable to any extent for injury to the navvies or the contractor's workmen. On the other hand, if a canal company were constructing a tow-house or doing any work in connection with the canal, that company was not made the undertaker and would not be liable. What possible reason was there for distinguishing between a railway company and a canal company? Again, in the case of a building, the person undertaking the construction was the undertaker and the person for whom the house was being built was not the undertaker. Why should the person for whom the house was being built be less an undertaker than a railway company for whom a railway or station was being made? It was very difficult to see the principle on which this clause was framed. He did not say it was not an improvement on the old Act; he thought it was, but the clause was very far from perfection. He was not making these suggestions in any captious or carping spirit, but with a sincere desire to make the Bill a really good and workable measure. He hoped the Government would accept his Amendment.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 7, page 4, line 40, to leave out the words 'by the undertakers.'"—(*Lord Davey.*)

Lord BELPER: I fully recognise that the noble and learned Lord's object is to assist in making this a workable and satisfactory Bill, but if we omitted the words "by the undertakers," we should make employment by anybody else employment under the Act, for which the servant would get compensation if injured. It is necessary to provide that the employment in respect of which the compensation is paid should be employment by the undertaker. If the words "by the undertakers" were omitted, as proposed by the noble and learned Lord, the effect would be enormously to enlarge the extent of the Bill, and to enlarge it far beyond what was intended.

Lord DAVEY hoped the Government would consider this point and if they thought it necessary to say employment by someone, he hoped they would not retain the word "undertakers." The undertaker might not be the employer at all. Therefore, if they confined it to employment by the undertaker, they would exclude a large class of workmen.

Lord ALVERSTONE thought Lord Davey had for once overlooked the drift of his own observations. The words "employment by the undertakers" were in the existing Act and were absolutely necessary. There must be some limit; otherwise, anyone who happened to be the mere master of the servant might be liable under the Bill. The only effect of the Amendment in the Bill was to alter the class of works as to which the undertakers should be liable.

Lord DAVEY repeated that it was desirable to substitute another word. He regretted very much that the word "undertakers" had ever been introduced, and he hoped the Government would consider the substitution of some such term as "principal contractor."

Amendment, by leave of the Committee, withdrawn.

Lord TWEEDMOUTH moved an Amendment to include shoeing forges in the enumeration of employments to which the Act applies. This Amendment, he said, did not add anything to the Bill or bring in any new principle. It merely defined and made clear what he believed to be the intention of the Bill itself. If he was wrong in that opinion, then his Amendment became doubly necessary because of the risk that farriers might be cut out altogether from the benefits of this Bill. That certainly was not the intention of the Departmental Committee, because on page 120, Sub-section 312, they most clearly recommended that farriers should be included within the benefits of the Bill. There, smithys had been included amongst the places to which the Bill referred, which no doubt was meant to cover farriers. So far as country districts were concerned, the word "smithy" would cover farriers, because in country villages the blacksmith did general iron-forging work and repairing work, and made shoes and shod horses; but that was not the case in London and in the great cities. They had come to be completely separate trades. There was, on the one hand, the blacksmith who worked in the smithy, who was a forger of iron, and there was, on the other, the farrier who worked in the shoeing forge or the farrier's shop, who was not a blacksmith in the sense of iron-forging, but a maker of horse-shoes, and an expert in fastening them on. There were in London something like 3,000 farriers who were not blacksmiths at all. It seemed to him that these men should be most carefully included in the Act. If it was intended that the word "smithy" should cover them, there would be no objection to making that clear by adding the words "shoeing forge," which distinctly covered the sort of case he was speaking of. This was a matter felt very keenly by the particular trade on whose behalf he was speaking, and he hoped the Government would accept the Amendment.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 7, page 4, line 43, after the words 'engineering work' to insert the words 'shoeing forge.'"—(*Lord Tweedmouth.*)

Lord BELPER: I can assure my noble friend that it is the intention of the Government to include shoeing forges in this clause. I should have thought that "smithy" would include "shoeing forge," but if the noble Lord is satisfied that that is not the case, probably it would be better to make it perfectly clear by leaving in "smithy" and inserting after it, in parentheses, the words "including shoeing forge."

Lord TWEEDMOUTH: I will move my Amendment in that form.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

The Earl of WEMYSS had given notice to move to amend Sub-section (b) (i) by inserting, after the word "canal" the words "in the United Kingdom." He said that the sub-section to which his Amendment referred provided that anybody in the employment of the undertaker should be entitled to compensation if injured in the process of loading, unloading, or coaling, or in painting or repairing any ship in any harbour or canal. There was a strong feeling on the part of shipowners that it ought to be clearly understood that these words did not apply to harbours or canals outside the United Kingdom. The noble Lord in charge of the Bill had told him, in course of conversation, that the words in his Amendment were unnecessary, as no part of the Bill applied outside the United Kingdom, and that any words such as he proposed to insert would be not only superfluous in themselves, but might create doubt as to whether other parts of the Bill applied outside the United Kingdom or not. In those circumstances he would not move his Amendment.

LORD BELPER: The facts are as stated by the noble Earl. The Bill refers entirely to the United Kingdom. The insertion of the words in the Amendment would not only be superfluous, but might lead to the idea that other parts of the Bill, in which the words were not inserted, were intended to apply outside the United Kingdom.

LORD DAVEY moved to amend Subsection (b) (iii.), which made the Act apply to employment by the undertaker in the care or management of horses or locomotives. This was, he said, an entirely new departure, because it would render any gentleman who employed a coachman or groom liable for any accident that might happen to them. If that was what the Government intended he had no objection to it, but he wished to point out that it was an entirely new departure. Hitherto this compensation had not been applied to domestic servants at all, with the doubtful exception of gardeners, but if it was to apply to coachmen and grooms he did not see why it should not apply to other domestic employment as well. If the noble Lord stated that it was intended to apply to private coachmen or grooms he would not press his Amendment.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 7, page 5, line 18, after the word 'locomotives' to insert the words 'for the purpose of any trade or business, or in agriculture.'"—(*Lord Davey.*)

LORD BELPER: The idea is that it should apply to coachmen, grooms, and those in charge of horses, and also to chauffeurs of motor-cars. With regard to what the noble and learned Lord said as to this being a new departure, I am informed that gardeners do come under the operation of the Act of 1900, and, therefore, the departure was made in that year. There seems to me no reason why, if gardeners are to get compensation, persons employed in much more dangerous occupations, such as chauffeurs and those having to do with horses, should not be included.

LORD DAVEY said his desire had been achieved. He wanted to know what was the meaning of the clause. He still thought it was introducing a new and wide principle by a side wind, and he doubted very much whether gardeners were included in the Act of 1900. He would withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave of the Committee, withdrawn.

LORD DAVEY moved to amend Section (2), which provides that "In this Act 'railway' and 'tramway' include every station, and siding of or belonging to the railway or tramway." He moved to leave out the second "and," and to insert, after "siding," the words "or other building or work." The Amendment was merely a drafting one.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 7, page 5, line 22, to leave out the second word 'and'; and in line 23, after the word 'siding' to insert the words 'or other building or work.'"—(*Lord Davey.*)

LORD BELPER: I do not think this is merely a drafting Amendment. The definition of "railway" is that it includes every station, siding, wharf, and dock, and, therefore, it is not thought necessary to put them in the definition of "railway" in this Bill. If Lord Davey's words were adopted, it would bring every railway hotel, for instance, under the operation of the Act, and sometimes railway hotels are not even in direct connection with the railway. More than that, it would bring the clerks in an office belonging to a railway in the middle of a town under the Act. The Government do not think it necessary to extend it in this way. I think the noble and learned Lord will find that the definition of "railway" really covers all that it is necessary to cover, and that every part of a railway, including offices, stations, goods warehouses, and goods sheds, will be included in the Bill as it stands at present.

LORD DAVEY said he doubted whether workshops or engine sheds were included, but if the noble Lord was satisfied that they were he would not press the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave of the Committee, withdrawn.

LORD NEWTON moved to amend the definition of "undertakers" in the case of a railway by leaving out the words "owner or lessee" and inserting the words "having the actual use or occupation" of the railway. As he read the Bill, if he were the owner of a railway, and the lessee should prove to be an impecunious person, he could be sued for compensation in the case of an accident, although he had no control over the railway.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 7, page 6, lines 18 and 19, to leave out the words 'owner or lessee of or,' and after the word 'person' in line 19 to insert the words 'having the actual use or occupation or.'"—(*Lord Newton.*)

Lord BELPER: I am informed that the words in the Bill cover every possible person who ought to be liable to pay compensation. Under the Bill the employees of a railway company who are employed outside would get compensation. The Bill is not confined to the line itself as before, and we believe that with that alteration everybody will be covered, and that it is not necessary to make any alteration.

Lord JAMES of HEREFORD asked whether, if the owner of a railway leased it, he would be liable as well as the lessee.

Lord BELPER: I understand that no difficulty has arisen on this point, but I will undertake that it shall be considered.

Lord NEWTON: On the understanding that it is considered in Standing Committee I withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave of the Committee, withdrawn.

Clause 7, as amended, agreed to.

Lord NEWTON moved to insert the following new clause: "In Paragraph (1) (*a*) (i) of the First Schedule after the words 'equal to his' insert 'net,' after the words 'amount of his' insert 'net,' and after the words 'average weekly' insert 'net' and in Paragraph (1) (*b*) of the First Schedule after the words 'average weekly' insert 'net.'"

Lord Newton.

This Amendment dealt with the question of net and gross earnings of men in regard to the question of compensation. It would appear that the intention of the Bill was that only the net earnings would be considered, but he understood that considerable difficulty had arisen over this point in cases that had been tried, and it seemed to him desirable that it should be cleared up. In Paragraph 216 of the Report of the Departmental Committee it was pointed out that some such Amendment as this was necessary. It was there stated that the practice in many industries was to make deductions from gross earnings for certain purposes, and that in coal mines it was the practice for colliers to pay those working under them out of their earnings. The Committee mentioned that Mr. Ratcliffe Ellis contended that "earnings" ought to mean "net earnings," the actual reward or recompense for labour, and with this contention they agreed. It was on that finding that he based his Amendment. He was aware that this question had been met to a certain extent by one of the sub-sections in this clause, but he ventured to think that the introduction of the word "net" would simplify matters.

Amendment moved—

"After Clause 7 to insert the following new clause: 'In Paragraph (1) (*a*) (i) of the First Schedule after the words 'equal to his' to insert the word 'net,' after the words 'amount of his' to insert the word 'net,' and after the words 'average weekly' to insert the word 'net,' and in Paragraph (1) (*b*) of the First Schedule after the words 'average weekly' to insert the word 'net.''"—(*Lord Newton.*)

The LORD CHANCELLOR: I am very much afraid this is one of the instances in which an attempt to make a thing clearer than it is already would make it the reverse. If the word "earnings" is used, then it is simply a question of fact for the tribunal to ascertain what the earnings are—not necessarily the amount of money actually paid, but the sum actually received by the workman after all deductions or allowances had been taken into account. If you introduce the word "net" you do not get any further definition because the same question, What are the earnings? will still arise, but I think an additional source of confusion may be imported into the consideration of the question. I therefore hope my noble friend will not insist on his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave of the Committee, withdrawn.

Clauses 8 and 9 agreed to.

Clause 10.

Lord DAVEY moved to amend the provision that "in the case of partial incapacity the weekly payment shall in no case exceed one-half of the difference between the amount of the average weekly earnings of the workman before the accident and the average weekly amount which he is earning or is able to earn in some suitable employment or business after the accident," by the deletion of the word "suitable," and the substitution of the word "other." The word "suitable" seemed to invite litigation, and he thought the words "in some other employment" would answer every purpose.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 10, page 9, line 21, to leave out the word 'suitable' and to insert the word 'other.'"—(*Lord Davey.*)

Lord BELPER: The word "suitable" was put in for the benefit of the workman to meet a case where a skilled man was offered some totally unsuitable employment. It really is to the benefit of the workman, because if he was not offered suitable employment he would get full compensation. I think the word "suitable," which can always be interpreted in a reasonable way, does guard the workman, and that was the object of inserting it in the Bill.

Amendment, by leave of the Committee, withdrawn.

Clause 10 agreed to.

Clauses 11 to 16 agreed to.

Lord DAVEY moved to amend the Second Schedule to the principal Act, Sub-section (2), by inserting, after the first word "Judge," the words "or by a single arbitrator appointed by him," and repealing the words from "rules of Court" to the end of the sub-section. The sub-section in question enabled a County Court Judge, according to procedure prescribed by rules of Court, or if in England by permission of the Lord Chancellor, to appoint a single arbitrator. The Lord Chancellor would be able to tell the House whether he had ever been called upon in this connection. He failed to see the necessity of making an additional reference in England only to the Lord Chancellor before a County Court Judge could appoint an arbitrator. He did not think the Lord Chancellor should be brought in for such a small purpose.

Amendment moved—

"In the Second Schedule to the principal Act, Sub-section (2), after the first word 'Judge' to insert the words 'or by a single arbitrator appointed by him,' and to repeal the words from 'rules of Court' to the end of the sub-section."—(*Lord Davey.*)

The LORD CHANCELLOR: This is one of the sections of the Act that have operated without the least friction or difficulty. I may tell my noble and learned friend that I am continually applied to, and that the provision is a very wholesome and proper one. If the County Court Judge has a sufficient amount of work to do, it is proper that he should transfer the duties of arbitration to somebody else, but it is quite necessary that there should be some check upon that power, and therefore it is only on application to the Lord Chancellor that he gets the power to do that, and I have never had any difficulty at all with County Court Judges on the matter. Applications are constantly made to me, and I accede to them where the circumstances justify it.

Amendment, by leave of the Committee, withdrawn.

Lord DAVEY moved, on Paragraph (7) of the Second Schedule of the Act—

"In case of the death or refusal or inability to act of an arbitrator, a Judge of the High Court at Chambers may, on the application of any party, appoint a new arbitrator, to substitute 'the County Court Judge' for 'a Judge of the High Court at Chambers.'"

Their Lordships would observe that it was the County Court Judge who appointed the arbitrator in the first instance, but in the case of the death of the arbitrator or his inability to act a Judge of the High Court was called upon to appoint a new arbitrator. This introduced fresh expense, as the application had to be made in London. If the County Court Judge could appoint the arbitrator in the first instance he failed to see why on the death of that arbitrator, or his inability to act, the County Court Judge should not be empowered to appoint a successor.

Amendment moved—

"In Sub-section (7) to leave out the words 'a Judge of the High Court at Chambers' and insert the words 'the County Court Judge.'"—(*Lord Davey.*)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: There is no objection to this Amendment, and we accept it.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clauses 17 to 21 agreed to.

Clause 22.

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD called attention to Sub-section 4 of this clause, which provides that—

"The principal Act and the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1900, shall as from the commencement of this Act take effect subject to the additions, omissions, and substitutions required by this Act, and any copy of the principal Act or the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1900, printed after the passing of this Act by authority of His Majesty may be printed with the additions, omissions, and substitutions required by this Act."

This would, he said, give the King's printer the right to take the Bill when it became an Act, and himself ingraft it into the old Act. It was a very serious matter to give the power to any unknown individual to substitute one set of words in an Act of Parliament for another. The burden of doing that ought to be cast upon the Clerk of the Parliaments or some other authorised person. He hoped that at a subsequent stage a solution of this serious difficulty would be found.

Lord Davey.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: My noble and learned friend has made this objection on a former occasion with regard to another Bill, but I take a totally different view of the meaning of the clause. In my view it simply authorises the printer to print the amended Act in the same way as he was originally authorised to print the Act of which this is an Amendment. I take it that the word which has misled my noble and learned friend is the word "required." If by the word required was meant that the printer had any jurisdiction to determine what alteration of language would be appropriate to the amended Act, I should agree with every word of my noble and learned friend's objection, but I do not take that view. "Required" means required by the enactment of the statute, and therefore this simply authorises the King's printer to print the Bill as your Lordships' House and the other House have agreed to it and does not permit him to alter or to omit a single word. The idea is that the printer requires some authorisation to reprint the amended Act. My own view is that the section is not required at all. I do not believe it adds anything. The printer is entitled to print the amended Act; that would be involved in the general authority that he has to print what the Legislature has enacted; and if there is the slightest idea that the printer can exercise any discretion, or that he has any right to print anything but what he gets from the Clerk of the Parliaments as having been enacted, I should agree with every word my noble and learned friend has said. But, as I have said, I do not take that view. I think the language used is a little imprudent, and that the word "enacted" might be substituted for the word "required," which would, I think, get over the difficulty.

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD said it was not merely a question of the word "required." The point was that by this section the printer would be authorised to take this Bill when it became an Act and incorporate it with the principal Act. Parliament should not delegate that duty to the King's printer.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: To my mind it does not in the least degree matter if the printer had printed improperly some word in the print, because the moment it was ascertained that he had done that it would be something outside his duties. I do not, however, think it is at all likely to take place. I think my noble and learned friend is confusing two things. When the Act is issued from the Clerk of the Parliaments as having been enacted by Parliament, all that the printer has to do is to print it; and it seems to me that my noble and learned friend is under an entire misapprehension as to what could happen in the circumstances he has suggested.

Clause 22 agreed to.

Bill re-committed to the Standing Committee; and to be printed as amended. (No. 70.)

CRIMINAL CASES (RESERVATION OF POINTS OF LAW, BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The EARL of HALSBURY): My Lords, in moving the Second Reading of this Bill I do not think it will be necessary to detain your Lordships at any length. Your Lordships are aware that there is no Court of Appeal in criminal cases, strictly so-called, in this country. But an Act of Parliament which is not very old provided that if a learned Judge felt that there was some question of law, as distinguished from a question of fact, that required deliberate discussion in a Court appropriate to the purpose, he should have power to reserve such a question, that a new Court should be constituted for Crown Cases Reserved, and that this Court should have certain powers given to it—power to set aside the conviction, and power, I think, to order a new trial. But a question has arisen. It is very unusual, I believe I may say almost unexampled, for any one of His Majesty's Judges to refuse to reserve a question which is really a question that could properly be argued. Yet sometimes Judges who are not of the *status* of His Majesty's Judges are a little jealous of their decisions being made the subject of inquiry, and it has sometimes happened that a Judge has refused to reserve a point. Your Lordships are aware that a great number of persons, chairmen of quarter sessions, Recorders, and others, are included in the description of Judges who have power to reserve these points. A remarkable case has occurred and has given rise to much discussion. I have no desire to express an opinion on that particular case, whether the learned Judge was right or wrong in the matter. But it is thought that it is very undesirable to leave it to the discretion of a learned Judge uncontrolled, even including His Majesty's Judges; that it is desirable to make it compulsory, upon the order of the Court, that they shall reserve a question of law. Accordingly, the view has been entertained that, instead of this power being permissive, if an application is made to the Court of King's Bench upon material sufficient in their view they shall order the learned Judge to reserve the point of law. That is, in effect, the whole of the amendment to the Act of Parliament which is suggested in this Bill. I think that the general object of the Bill is one to which your Lordships will give your consent. There may be some discussion in Committee, when we come to the questions of under what circumstances and under what regulations and restrictions this power should be exerised by the Court of King's Bench. But I think your Lordships will agree that the Bill should be given a Second Reading.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Bill read 2^a, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.

THE NATIVES OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

*THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY rose to call attention to the Report of the Royal Commission on the Condition of the Natives of Western Australia; and to ask for information.

He said: My Lords, in rising to call attention to the subject of which I have given notice, I desire to make a single preliminary observation. The task which I have undertaken is not a pleasant one, and I do not think the subject to those of your Lordships who give attention to it will be found agreeable or satisfactory. I hold in my hand the Report of the Royal Commission on the Condition of Natives in Western Australia, and I am happy to say that the Report is not widely current in England. It is probably well that that should be the case, because its general currency would be apt to do more harm than good because it would lead to the rash generalisation that the description contained in it is typical of the condition of things in other portions of His Majesty's dominions, which certainly is not the case. I venture to think that the statements which this Report contains are unique among modern records of administrative work in any portion of the British Empire.

The Report deals, as those of your Lordships who have read it will know, with the condition of, roughly speaking, 40,000 aboriginal inhabitants in a region extending over about 1,000 miles in one direction and 500 miles in another in the northern portion of Western Australia. For some time allegations have been made that the treatment of the aboriginal tribes in the northern portion of Western Australia was, to say the least, very unsatisfactory. Some eight or nine years have elapsed since attention was called to the subject by the Anglican Bishop in Western Australia, the Bishop of Perth, who lives some fifteen to sixteen hundred miles away; and the allegations which he made were, I believe, laid before the Legislature of the Colony. They were, however, considered to have been exaggerated and no practical action was taken on the subject. There has been there, as elsewhere, an officer known as the Protector of Aborigines, but that officer lives at Perth, which is many hundreds of miles away from the scene to which this Report refers, and it is naturally impossible for him, as matters now stand, to exercise a personal supervision unless he were more largely supplied with officers under him than is the case at present.

The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

Last year the Governor of Western Australia, Admiral Sir F. Bedford, felt the matter to be so important that he borrowed for the purpose of inquiry the Chief Protector of Aborigines in Queensland, on the other side of the Continent, and that gentleman, Dr. Roth, a man of singular capacity for the work, was appointed a Royal Commissioner to investigate the allegations made and to ascertain the actual facts respecting the treatment of the aborigines. The document I hold in my hand is the Report which he produced, and one satisfactory element in the whole consideration of this subject is that the Report emanates from ourselves so to speak; that it is not from an outside critic, still less someone hostile to our administration, that the information has been obtained; but that the British authorities in the colony themselves have brought the matter to light. The difficulty of making the inquiry becomes apparent the moment the facts are looked at—the largeness of the area, the sparseness of the population, and the fact that the only witnesses available are people who are themselves more or less identified with the very acts in question. That is not quite true of them all, because there are those engaged on the mission stations, and the information which comes from them is, of course, of the highest importance. His accuracy can always be checked by such statements as would be made in cross-examination.

The conditions that are prevalent in that region are certainly conditions with which it is excessively difficult for anybody to deal. This great native population is divided into a large number of small tribes, most of whom are hostile to each other; so much so, that it is rendered impossible for a member of one tribe to pass in safety through the region roamed over by another. Hitherto they have subsisted mainly on kangaroos and other wild animals. The difference that has come into their lives has been this — that into this region have come a large number of white squatters or settlers, who have been granted large tracts of country, and whose interest is to eliminate the kangaroo and to rear cattle and sheep. In the result the natives are driven to great straits, and not unnaturally resort to the killing of cattle and sheep for subsistence. Possibly they are unable in such a region as that to distinguish between the ownership of cattle and the wild kangaroo on which they have been accustomed largely to subsist. The ignorance and degradation of the race is, of course, immense, and the internecine warfare makes the matter all the more difficult if we try to devise remedies. The Report then states the facts that have come to light after careful inquiry and examination of witnesses by this exceedingly competent Royal Commissioner. I am going to quote some sentences from the Report, but I have compared it most carefully with the evidence which follows, and I am not able to find anything which is inconsistent in the evidence as compared with the Report which summarises it.

The first point raised is that of the conditions under which employment is given by white people to the members of the aboriginal tribes. It is usually given to the natives on the runs, far less because of the advantage that comes from their labour than because it is only possible to get the natives under the control of the squatter or settler by making them in some sense his employees. For such employment as the white settler gives the natives, the sole return is food and clothing. No wages whatever are paid. It is said that this is practically the only course to be adopted, because natives have no use for money except to spend it on drink. Further—and this is noteworthy—there is usually no indenture of any kind with regard to the employment of natives by white people. Indentured labour, where we are dealing with native races or savage people employed by another race, could hardly, I think, find a better argument in its support than the details of what may happen where there is no indenture, and where the natives are employed at the will of those who hire them and with practically no control exercised or no responsibility undertaken by any outside authority, at any rate in regard to the person who gives them employment. Employment is given both outdoor and indoor, and it is thus described by Dr. Roth—

> "Even without contracts the blacks are not free to come and go as they please. The assistance of the police is also invoked to bring such runaways back, an official acquiescence which is, of course, quite illegal: the native is practically forced to work for his so-called master. While under such circumstances the absence of a contract does not prevent the employer securing and enforcing the services of the aboriginal, it relieves him of all responsibilities in the way of rations, clothing, and maintenance during sickness."

That is the condition prevalent; and the Report goes on to say—

> "The Chief Protector is obliged to admit the injustice of a system where, taking a concrete case, a child of tender years may be indentured to a mistress as domestic up to twenty-one years of age, and receives neither education nor payment in return for the services rendered."

The total absence of an endeavour to educate these people is certainly one of the most marked features in the accounts given of their employment and conditions. It is not very easy to distinguish between enforced labour without wages [the police being employed to bring back a runaway, and the conditions being those that I have described] and that which every subject of the British Crown desires to repudiate—a system of slavery.

Far more serious than the account of the way in which labour is obtained is the procedure for the investigation and punishment of crime and wrong-doing, the only crime prevalent being that of killing cattle. That is the common offence, and the story of what takes place when that occurs is certainly an unpleasant one to read. Information comes to the police that such instances are occurring in a particular district. A police expedition starts to that region, and I will read from the Report an account of what takes place—

> "When starting out on such an expedition the constable takes a variable amount of provisions, private and Government horses, and a certain number of chains. Both he and his black trackers, as many as five of them, are armed with Winchester rifles. A warrant is taken out, in the first place, if information is laid against certain aborigines, but when the police go out on patrol, and the offence is reported, the offenders are tracked and arrested without warrant. Very often there is no proper information laid, in that it is verbal; when already out on patrol, there may be no information at all. Blacks may be arrested without instructions, authority, or information received from the pastoralist whose cattle are alleged to have been killed; the pastoralist may even object to such measures having been taken. Not knowing beforehand how many blacks he is going to

> arrest, the policeman only takes chains sufficient for about fifteen natives; if a large number are reported guilty, he will take chains to hold from about twenty-five to thirty. Chains in the northern, not in the southern, portion of this State are fixed to the necks instead of to the wrists of native prisoners. . . . Children of from fourteen to sixteen years of age are neck-chained. There are no regulations as to the size, weight, mode of attachment, or length of chain connecting the necks of any two prisoners. When the prisoner is alone, the chain is attached to his neck and hands, and wound round his body; the weight prevents him running away so easily. . . . Apparently, unknown to the Commissioner of Police, chains are used for female natives, not only at night, but sometimes during the day; these women are the unwilling witnesses arrested illegally for the Crown."

That is amplified in detail. I have given your Lordships a single quotation only. At once the question arises, why is it necessary, in an investigation of that kind, to bring to the scene of inquiry or trial so large a number of witnesses? The answer is not far to seek in the Report—

> "The larger the number of prisoners and witnesses, the better, pecuniarily, for the police, who receive from 1s. 6½d. to 2s. 5d. daily per head, or as it is called in the North-Western vernacular 'per knob.' One constable admits making a profit; a corporal considers that this allowance acts as a temptation to bring in a larger number of prisoners and witnesses than otherwise; a civilian does not think so many cases would be brought before the Courts if these allowances were not sanctioned; a resident magistrate has always been struck with the idea that this was the reason for so many natives being brought in at a time.'"

There is still another reason, upon which I do not desire to dwell. It relates, I need hardly say, to what happens with regard to the women and girls who are caught as witnesses. The culprit and witnesses once secured, the trial follows.

The conditions of the trial are these. The only interpreter available is one of the trackers—one of those who have brought the culprits down—and a conviction is always obtained. The native prisoners often plead guilty, in ignorance of the meaning of the questions asked. If a man were asked whether he had not killed an ox, he would say "Yes" if he happened to have killed an ox at any time. I quote the following from the Report—

> "The resident magistrate, Wyndham, states, 'I think, and have seen it, that a man will plead guilty now for killing a beast some time ago. The native cannot separate two charges on two beasts, and will still have the same offence in his mind; if he kills a bullock once he will plead guilty to every subsequent charge of killing a bullock, no matter how often he will be charged with it.' Thus, all to the advantage of the prosecution, when once the native has been induced to plead guilty, there is no necessity, under this Criminal Code Amendment Act of 1902, for any awkward questions being asked concerning proof of identity or ownership of the beast, the actual killing, eating, or alleged removal of the carcase. One witness, who has brought about or perhaps over, 100 natives into Court, does not remember any who have been found 'not guilty'; under the circumstances already detailed this is no matter for surprise.'"

Again, this question was asked of one of the gaolers in one of the most extensive prisons—

> "Amongst the aborigines sentenced for cattle-killing whom you have shown me and to whom you have spoken in my presence, how many do you think really understand what they are here for?"

His answer was—

> "Not one of them, in my opinion."

Part of their employment as prisoners being the mending of roads, they believe they have come down for that purpose, and are totally unaware what the circumstances are under which they have been brought there. There is much difficulty in getting the witnesses home again because of the hostility of the different tribes, which prevents the natives of one tribe passing through the region occupied by another. The peril of going is great; the peril of staying, especially for the women, though of a different character, is greater still. Rations and allowances are given to the police for escorting them back, but it does not follow that they are so escorted. I quote again from the Report—

> "Because rations are charged for to take the witnesses home again, it does not follow that they are escorted back; in some cases they are certainly not; in others they may hardly have time to get to their destination before they are 'rushed in' again by the police with another mob. It is no secret that the police say if the ration allowance was cut down or taken away they would not arrest so many natives. By their own assertions, every native caught means more money in their pocket; reliable witnesses have heard such assertions made. At present there is nothing to prevent the constable arresting as many blacks as he chooses, while there is no limit to the number of witnesses he is allowed to bring in with him."

As to the treatment of the prisoners in goal it seems almost incredible that under the British flag such conditions as are described in the Report can exist—

> "Except in times of sickness, etc., the prisoner is neck-chained from the day he comes into gaol until the day he leaves it, sometimes from two to three years and upwards, according to sentence."

It is further stated that—

> "All the gaolers in the North-West are in agreement that the present system of neck-chains could be abolished, and suitably replaced by wrist-cuffs, one prisoner's right hand being connected by chains to his neighbour's left; that a shorter connecting chain could be used; that more freedom of movement would be allowed; that the present employment outside the prison walls would not be interfered with; and that, when necessary, the transport of prisoners, thus chained, could be effected in safety. . . . Chains could be abolished in the case of aboriginals working inside the prison, and at night, if the gaols were properly built."

From the accounts we gather that there are practically no walls round the gaols, and the only mode of keeping the prisoners within them is by the process that this Report indicates. The following question was asked—

> "If you had a gaol built sufficiently strong, would it be necessary to so chain aboriginals?

to which the reply was—

> "No. The chains would only be necessary when they were out working."

The witness was next asked—

> "Give me your personal opinion about those chains being used at all?"

and he replied—

> "I do not see that we can do without them. The chains could be abolished in the case of aborigines working inside the prison, and at night, if we had properly built gaols."

I think I have said enough—though I have given you the merest outline—to show that there was at least ample justification for the inquiry that has taken place. There are many other points of great importance upon which it would be possible to deal in connection with this matter. Along a great portion of the coast, if not the whole of it, are pearl fisheries in which a large number of Malays are engaged. What has happened when these pearl fishers land and supply drinks to the natives, what the drink is exchanged for, and the scenes that follow, I would again prefer not to quote. The whole of the conditions of the pearl fisheries require most careful examination. The Protector states that he has money at his disposal for relieving natives, but has no means of securing that the money or the rations he gives for the relief of the indigent or starving natives reach them. All this, however, raises a question of inefficient administration rather than of principles. I distinguish between questions of that kind, and the question of the existence of a general system of treatment of natives which seems to belong to an age utterly different from that in which we live. I am far from wishing to ignore the extraordinary difficulties of the administrative problem, but I have said enough to show justification for the protest first made, I am glad to say, by some of the Church authorities a good many years ago, and renewed from time to time, and to prove the need for protective legislation.

Two points seem to me satisfactory in the matter. In the first place, I cannot find anything in the Report to show that the settlers in their ordinary behaviour to the natives are systematically cruel. The other point is that the information comes from the authorities themselves. It is eminently satisfactory that it should be so, and that the information is not the outcome of hostile or outside criticism.

Of course, I am well aware that the matter concerns a self-governing colony, and that it is not for His Majesty's Government at home to say what can most effectively be done at this moment; but I cannot but believe that the fact that the matter has been ventilated in England will assist the colonial authorities in dealing vigorously with it. This matter was brought before the House of Commons some six weeks ago, but, strangely enough, it did not receive any great notice in the Press, although the speeches, of course, have appeared in *Hansard*. The Colonial Secretary then stated that he was in communication with the authorities in Western Australia and hoped to be able to ascertain quite speedily what was taking place. I shall be very anxious to learn to-night what has been the result of those communications and what is being done in Western Australia itself.

Though the matter is one which immediately concerns Western Australia, it does concern the whole of the British Empire. We have always believed, and prided ourselves in the belief, that we of the British race have some peculiar gift—it has been proved a thousand times in India and elsewhere—for dealing with the extraordinarily difficult problem of government of races other than our own; and I venture to think that a Report of this kind, while it comes to us as a rude shock, is satisfactory in this, that it is unique in its character. It may be asked: what has been the action during this time of those who represent religious organisations? I am not in the least prepared to deny that if funds had been placed at our disposal, more might have been done than has been done, but it is satisfactory to note that a great deal has been done. A certain Father Nicholas, of the Roman Catholic Mission in that region, has been doing extraordinarily self-sacrificing work among the people, and the account of his work is the one piece of bright reading in the Report. As far as the Church of England is concerned, we are determined to make a large and more systematic attempt to deal with the problem; and steps will be taken to send out men really competent to investigate these matters for themselves, to try to bring some elements of civilisation into the condition of the aboriginal tribes, and, what is still more important, to raise the standard of the sense of responsibility among the white people.

*VISCOUNT KNUTSFORD: My Lords, as I had a great deal to do with this question of the treatment of natives in Western Australia during the time I had the honour to be Secretary of State for the Colonies, perhaps your Lordships will allow me to say a few words before the noble Duke the Under-Secretary replies. Almost the first question that came before me when I took office in 1887 was the question of granting responsible government to Western Australia. Personally, I was strongly in favour of that step being taken, mainly because I advocated the federation of the great Australian Colonies, and that federation would not have been complete had not Western Australia been included, and yet that colony could not have been included so long as it had a different form of Government to that prevailing in all the other Australian Colonies.

At that very time I had my attention called to the statements that had been made in 1886 as to the cruel and illegal treatment of the natives in the North and North-West districts of West Australia, both by squatters and the police. These statements had been brought under the notice of my predecessors, Lord Granville and Mr. Stanhope, and had, under their orders, been inquired into by the Governor. There could be no doubt that a very serious state of things existed which required immediate and careful protection and supervision, and, in these circumstances, I thought it only just and necessary for the protection of the natives to insist as a condition of granting responsible government to Western Australia that an Aborigines Protection Board should be maintained, and that certain funds should be provided each year for the use of the Board to be spent in relieving the natives and promoting their welfare generally. An Aborigines Protection Board had been created by a local Act in 1886, no doubt owing to the complaints that had then been made of the treatment of natives, and that Board had among its duties—

> "To exercise a general supervision and care over all matters affecting the interests and welfare of the aborigines, and to protect them against ill-treatment, imposition, and fraud."

The maintenance of that Board seemed to me a necessary condition to make when granting responsible government. This condition was strongly objected to in Western Australia, but I persisted, as I considered that in view of the difficulties and questions, financial or otherwise, that arise upon the creation of a new form of Government, it was very likely, unless some clause of this kind was inserted, that the interests of the natives would be overlooked, at all events, for some time. At last the Legislative Council yielded, and a section (Sect. 70) giving effect to the conditions, was inserted in the Local Constitution Act. The Imperial Act sanctioning the Local Constitution Act was passed in 1890.

At the time that I insisted on this condition I was aware that it was not quite consistent with the principles of responsible government, but the circumstances were very peculiar, and, moreover, I was satisfied, and my successor, the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Ripon) and Mr. Chamberlain have since practically confirmed that view, that, but for the insertion of that clause, the Bill would not have passed the Imperial Parliament. In a despatch to the Governor of February 3rd, 1893, Lord Ripon writes—

> "Section 70 appeared in the Constitution Bill as passed by the Colonial Legislature, and undoubtedly largely contributed to its acceptance by the Imperial Parliament."

And Mr. Chamberlain in a dispatch of December 27th, 1895, says if these conditions, *i.e.*, maintenance of the Aborigines Protection Board, and fixed appropriation for its service, had been omitted—

> "There can be no doubt that the passage of the Bill through the House of Commons might have been rendered difficult, if not impracticable."

As I fully expected, applications were made, very soon after the establishment of responsible government, to the noble Marquess opposite in 1893 to allow the repeal of the clause, and to hand over the treatment of the natives altogether to the responsible Government, but the noble Marquess said that, though he regarded the provisions of the clause as of a temporary character, the time had not yet arrived for its repeal, and in that view Mr. Chamberlain in 1895 strongly concurred. In 1898, however, Mr. Chamberlain thought the time had arrived when the responsible Government should have the full care of the natives, and the Aborigines Protection Board was abolished. It appears now that there has been a recrudescence of the unfortunate state of things that previously obtained, and a full inquiry has been made by a most competent and experienced officer, Dr. Roth. The most rev. Primate has dealt with that Report, and I will only call your Lordships' attention to the concluding words of it. It says—

> "In the settled areas of those portions of the State along which his investigations have led him, your Commissioner is satisfied that the natives, generally speaking, are not subject to any actual physical cruelty. On the other hand, the wrongs and injustices taking place in these areas, and the cruelties and abuses met with in the unsettled districts, cannot be longer hidden or tolerated. Fortunately they can be largely remedied by proper legislation combined with firm Departmental supervision."

Dr. Roth made a number of recommendations, and I would like to ask the noble Duke the Under-Secretary for the Colonies whether any steps have been taken to legislate on the lines of those recommendations.

*LORD TENNYSON: My Lords, I have received a communication from Australia which will partly answer the question before the House. A great wave of indignation has swept over Australia in consequence of the revelations made by Dr. Roth. The acting Prime Minister of Western Australia has, however, assured a deputation which waited on him not long ago that the Government would adopt immediately some, at least, of Dr. Roth's recommendations. The following reforms, according to the communication I have received, are what the Government have pledged themselves to. More stringent measures are to be taken for the prevention of the grave immorality described by the Royal Commissioner. The services of the police are no longer to be available for the purposes of hunting down unindentured natives who have left their employment, as those natives are fully entitled to do. As far as the existing condition of the North-West gaols will permit, Dr. Roth's recommendation as to the chaining of natives is to be carried out. Native prisoners, when working out of doors, are to be chained by the wrist instead of by neck collars. The head-money system of rationing prisoners and witnesses is to be abolished. Amending legislation will be introduced at the commencement of the ensuing session of Parliament. I think the late Prime Minister, Mr. James, and the Government deserve the greatest credit for having secured the services of Dr. Roth. Dr. Roth is an expert, having studied the natives very carefully, and is well-known to me as a straightforward, fearless man, who does not mince matters for anybody. The shadow of civilisation darkens the path of the 100,000 or more natives who still survive in that great island continent, but I am sure your Lordships will rejoice with me that the Government and people of Western Australia have decided that they can and will do something effective to alleviate the lot of those natives who live under their immediate jurisdiction.

EARL CARRINGTON: My Lords, I should like to be permitted to say one or two words on this subject. I have not read the Report, but I think we are indebted to the most rev. Primate for the way in which he has brought this subject before the House, and for the very statesmanlike and temperate language which he used. I was very glad to hear from Lord Tennyson of the action taken by the Prime Minister of Western Australia. Indeed, any one who has had experience of Australian statesmen would feel certain that the matter would be dealt with at once. I was also very pleased to hear from the speech of the most rev. Primate that it is stated in the Report that there is nothing to prove intentional cruelty on the part of the squatters.

*THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: I did not say that that statement was made in the Report, but that there was no evidence in the Report of any such cruelty.

EARL CARRINGTON: I think that shows what the English character is, for your Lordships must remember that a squatter up country in that region is away from every sort of help and assistance. He is living in the middle of hostile tribes, and it is quite possible that he may return from his run to find his wife and children speared by the blacks. It is almost impossible to describe the dangers and difficulties of bush life up country. My own experience in New South Wales, and, indeed, in every part of Australia that I have visited, has convinced me that the statesmen and people of Australia are most anxious to do all they can to put a stop to any abuses of the kind brought before the House today by the most rev. Primate.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Duke of MARLBOROUGH): My Lords, the Government cannot but recognise the justice of the course which has been taken by the most rev. Primate in bringing this matter before the notice of your Lordships' House. The most rev. Primate has given a very accurate account of what is contained in the Report of Dr. Roth, and has pointed out to your Lordships many of those grave irregularities which, we must admit, have been committed in dealing with the native population in the western part of Australia. I am afraid there can be no doubt that many grave irregularities have occurred, and I can assure your Lordships, if that assurance be necessary, that the Government join with the most rev. Primate in deploring the condition of affairs, which is certainly contrary to our ideas of humanity. I was glad to hear from Lord Tennyson that in this we are at one with the whole of Australia. We desire, as keenly as the most rev. Primate, that steps should be immediately taken to mitigate and, I hope, to remove for all time the gross disabilities under which the indigenous population of Western Australia has suffered for some years past.

The Report of Dr. Roth displays a most deplorable condition of things, and no one, after reading it, would wish to offer any defence for much that that Report contains. It is certainly not the desire of His Majesty's Government, on the present occasion, to offer any defence. I will give your Lordships a short history, antecedent to this Report, and remind you of the steps which have already been taken, and which will be taken, to remove these grievances. In 1890, as the noble Viscount behind me (Viscount Knutsford) reminded your Lordships, responsible government was given to Western Australia, but the protection of the aborigines was not included in the Act, but was continued by the Aborigines Protection Board, an unofficial body, responsible only to the Governor of the Colony.

From 1892 onwards, the responsible Ministry in Western Australia were continually reminding us at home that it was not quite compatible with the principles of self-government to withdraw from them the right of looking after the native population. After considerable hesitation the Secretary of

State of the day granted them their request, and in 1897 the Aborigines Act was passed which did away with the old Protection Board and set up in its place an Aborigines Department, presided over by one of the responsible Ministers, and £5,000 was set aside for the proper protection of the aborigines, a sum which was increased last year to £8,000, and I am informed by those who are competent to know that a much higher sum than that has been spent during the last two or three years by the Department. The duties of the Department are, roughly, to apportion, distribute, and apply, as may seem fit, the money placed at their disposal, to distribute blankets, clothing, and other relief to the aborigines, to provide for the custody, maintenance, and education of the children, to provide, as far as practicable, for the supply of medical attendance and medicines, and to exercise a general supervision and care over all matters affecting the interests and welfare of these people.

It was hoped that this machinery which had been set up would adequately protect and safeguard the aborigines who were placed under the care of the responsible Ministry. As the Ministry sought for full responsibility in the matter of the care of the natives, we were entitled to expect that special care would be exercised in the discharge of those duties. It is pretty clear, however, that the Australian Ministry were far from satisfied with the working of the Act, and it was this which led them to send Dr. Roth as their Special Commissioner to report on the condition of affairs. The most rev. Primate has reminded your Lordships of the position occupied by Dr. Roth, and it is unneccessary for me to add anything to what has been said about this distinguished gentleman. Many of the results of Dr. Roth's inquiry have been detailed by the most rev. Primate, and I do not propose to travel over that ground in the course of my observations beyond saying this, that it is apparent that the Chief Protector of Aborigines has not sufficient power; that the system of contract is in a chaotic state; that the wages are never paid to the natives; and that only clothing and food are supplied to them, for the reason that if they were given money they would only spend it on drink or on the purchase of firearms.

Then there is the question of the pearl fisheries and the incidents connected therewith. I do not think it is necessary for me to dwell upon these incidents this evening, beyond saying that it is clear that sufficient precautions were not taken to prevent undesirable consequences taking place between the visitors to the shores of Western Australia and the aboriginal tribes. The most rev. Primate reminded your Lordships of the conduct of the police. He told the House that the chief crimes committed by the aborigines were sheep-stealing; and it is clear from the Report that natives have been arrested without authority, and that gross irregularities have been committed by the police in many ways. Then there is the question of the prisons, and the system by which the prisoners are chained. The system of giving relief is bad. In some instances kangaroo and lizard are supplied to the natives instead of the food which should be purchased with the money given to those responsible for distributing relief. There is a tendency for the natives to be dispossessed of the hunting rights to which they are entitled, and the kangaroo, lizard, and other animals on which they exist get killed off, and the consequence is that the natives have to commit the very crimes for which they can be severely punished.

The Report concludes by stating that—

> "In the settled areas of those portions of the State along which his investigations have led him, your Commissioner is satisfied that the natives, generally speaking, are not subject to any actual physical cruelty. On the other hand, the wrongs and injustices taking place in those areas and the cruelties and abuses met with in the unsettled districts cannot be longer hidden or tolerated."

I am sure no noble Lord will gainsay me when I say that there is no reason to suppose that the authorities in Western Australia were not animated by the most sincere desire to discharge their obligations towards the natives in a right and proper spirit. The intention of the Colonial Government has been perfectly good, but there is very little doubt that the machinery for carrying into effect the wishes and desires of the Government has entirely broken down. This is clearly seen from the Report. The Chief Protector of Aborigines has no one on whom he can rely; he has no officer under him, and he is obliged to get his information from the local magistrates and other people resident in the country, who may or may not choose to give him the information he requires; and I have no doubt there have been cases in which he has received erroneous information. In other cases the persons from whom he gets information may be people interested in keeping back the true facts.

This fundamental difficulty has been the fruitful parent of all the other irregularities which have been referred to. We deplore the consequences which have resulted from the insufficient control exercised by those who undertook the management of the native races; but inasmuch as self-government, which includes the right to solve this problem of the management of the natives, has been given to Western Australia, it would be unwise for us to suggest that they were incapable of carrying out the task which has been committed to their care. It must be recollected, as the most rev. Primate has observed, that this inquiry has not been forced upon the Government of Western Australia from outside. It is the direct result of their own investigations, and this fact alone is, I think, a sufficient guarantee that they are alive to the gravity of the situation.

The Commissioner not only points out the irregularities that have been committed, but at the same time suggests remedies for them; and at the end of his Report, speaking of the abuses that had been committed, he says—

> "Fortunately they are of such a nature that they can be remedied by proper legislation, combined with a firm departmental supervision."

Indeed, he goes even a step further. For each abuse that has been committed he recommends a specific remedy, and I should like most respectfully to ask the most rev. Primate whether he does not think that if all these recommendations are included in the measure now before the Colonial Parliament, and adequate steps are taken to ensure that that measure when passed into law is properly administered, we have got the best possible reason in the world for assuming that these abuses and irregularities may be entirely removed in future. The Parliament of Western Australia meets in about a week. They have not yet had an opportunity of studying this Report, but we are informed that a Bill will be introduced by the Ministry which will include the recommendations in the Report. In the meantime we are of opinion that all is being done which could possibly be done under the existing regulations to prevent a recurrence of those irregularities.

We are informed that since this Report has been issued the following regulations have been put into force temporarily. Police officers have been directed to use the greatest vigilance in carrying out these regulations. Further regulations have been made prohibiting the use of chains in prisons, without the sanction of the Governor, or of the Colonial Secretary of Western Australia, and outside the prisons as recommended by the Royal Commissioner; enforcing the discontinuance of the use of neck-chains; limiting the number of hours for which prisoners are made to work in the tropical heat; regulating the terms of contract under which natives are employed, and requiring that engagements should be properly attested; prohibiting police officers from returning to stations natives who have been unlawfully engaged; preventing the Asiatic pearlers from landing, except at prescribed places, and prohibiting the natives from frequenting such places; prohibiting the presence of women on board the pearling boats, and exacting the greatest vigilance for the detection of offences against the morality of children; laying down that arrests for cattle-stealing should only be made on direct evidence; that no female witnesses should be taken unless there were no male witnesses available; and that the grant of travelling rations for prisoners and witnesses should be accompanied by vouchers, by which means the police officer is deprived of the chance of making a profit on rations, and so of the inducement to seize as many witnesses and prisoners as possible.

Magistrates have been informed that their reports of convictions must contain information as to the locality, and must give the ages of the prisoners; and instructions have been given that the recommendations of the Royal Commissioner are to be carried out generally. I think these regulations, which are to be enforced vigorously and strenuously, clearly show the desire of the colony not to allow for a moment longer the irregularities and abuses which have been brought to light. We deplore the condition of affairs as disclosed in this Report, but we have no reason to believe that the Government of Western Australia are incapable of fulfilling those obligations and responsibilities towards the indigenous population which they voluntarily sought and which the Government of this country, after mature consideration, finally decided to grant to them.

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: My Lords, I am sure that every one in this House will agree with me in tendering thanks to the most rev. Primate for having raised this discussion. This is a question upon which it is highly desirable that the opinion of the people in this country should be made known to our Australian fellow-countrymen. I believe that that opinion will be likely to have greater weight than any other instrument that could be employed upon their legislation and upon the administration of native interests, and therefore I am very glad that the question has been raised. I am also glad that it has been raised in the tone which has distinguished this debate. There has been no attempt to ask the Government to take any steps inconsistent with the conditions under which responsible Government exists in Western Australia and elsewhere. Those conditions, as your Lordships know, leave to the Government at home no power of controlling the administration of a self-governing colony, and I rejoice to think there has been no attempt to-night to say a single word which pointed in the direction that anything could be done in regard to this matter except to express—as I have no doubt the Secretary of State has expressed, and will express—in the strongest manner the feeling which this Report has excited in this country, and to call upon the Government of Western Australia to remedy the great and crying evils which have been brought to our notice.

The noble Duke the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies has shown that the Government of Western Australia are fully alive to their duties. We might have concluded that from the fact that they had themselves appointed this Commissioner and sent him to inquire into the matter. Therefore we cannot doubt—indeed we are sure, after the speech of the noble Duke—that the Government of Western Australia are alive to their duties in this respect, and are going to take effectual measures for carrying out the recommendations of the Commissioner. There is one feature in this case which is very satisfactory, and it is that there is nothing in the Report to show that the natives in Western Australia are cruelly or unjustly used by those who employ them. It appears that it is in connection with the arrest of persons for trial for offences that the principal of these evils has arisen, and it is comparatively easy for the Government to deal with their officers and effectually put a stop to those evils.

We all know that there are no questions of greater difficulty than those which relate to the management of native races, especially of those so backward as the native inhabitants of Western Australia. They are questions full of complication and difficulty. In self-governing colonies they must be left to be dealt with by the responsible Government. The Secretary of State at home cannot fairly be charged with having the same responsibility over these matters in self-governing colonies that he has in other colonies which have nominated Executives. It must always be understood that if the management of native races is to be left to the self-governing Colonies they must be prepared, if they mismanage those natives—if they produce trouble and difficulty and possibly rebellion in the colony—to deal with those questions themselves, and must not expect aid in money or men from the home Government for the purpose of putting down trouble of that description. Happily there is no chance of such difficulties arising in Western Australia, for the natives there have no means of resistance of a serious kind; but the fact of their helplessness and ignorance makes it more essential that their treatment should be of the best and most satisfactory kind. Therefore I rejoice that an opportunity has been given of making known to the people of Western Australia the sentiments entertained in this country in regard to this matter, and also that the debate has elicited from the noble Duke a satisfactory statement with regard to the intentions of the Government of Western Australia.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The MARQUESS of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, I desire to add my thanks to those which the most rev. Primate has received for the manner in which he has treated this subject. I do not think it would have been possible to treat a case, which naturally appeals very strongly to our emotions, with more moderation and self-restraint than the most rev. Primate has shown. I read this Report, as the most rev. Primate did, with feelings of deep indignation, and also with feelings of humiliation, because we have always believed that evils of the kind which we are discussing were of rarer occurrence under British rule than under the rule of any other civilised Power. Holding that belief we have not infrequently taken others to task for breaches of those laws of humanity which we ourselves so sincerely desire to respect.

To my mind, one of the most mortifying features of these incidents is that they will, in the future, deprive our remonstrances of a good deal of the force that they have hitherto commanded. The noble Duke has offered to your Lordships the best defence which could be offered. He has dwelt strongly on the fact that the inquiry was initiated by the colony, and he has shown that the Colonial Government intend at the earliest moment to introduce the legislation which is necessary for the purpose of remedying some of these abuses. He has also shown that where executive action could be taken that action has already been resorted to. But the best defence that could be made was that which the noble Duke did in fact make—the defence that these things should not be allowed to happen again, and for that we must look to the colony itself. If the privileges of self-government mean anything they mean that these questions must be dealt with by the colonies that enjoy those privileges. I for one am ready to believe that we may look to the enlightened opinion of Western Australia to see that these incidents are not repeated. If we could conceive such an alternative, I think it would be most unfortunate, and the worst kind of education that we could give a young colony to take a question of this kind out of their hands and to place the care of their aborigines under a specially constituted board dissociated from the responsible Ministers of the colony.

I agree with the most rev. Primate as to the great difficulty of dealing with these problems. They are problems which present themselves all over the world, wherever the tide of what we are pleased to call civilisation comes into contact with uncivilised races. The problem generally takes this shape. The advance of the white man means the disappearance of the food supply of the natives. In Canada the buffalo is wiped out of existence; in Australia it is the kangaroo which disappears; in India, as the noble Marquess well remembers, the numerous sources of support which many of these indigenous races used freely to draw from the forests are denied to them because the preservation of the forests has become necessary for public purposes. And so it comes to pass that these poor people, finding themselves deprived of the means of existence, are driven to desperation. As often as not it is sheer hunger that prompts the acts by which they incur the ill-will, and sometimes bring upon themselves the vengeance, of the white settlers. The problem is a difficult one, and requires handling with the utmost patience and forbearance, and I trust that we may look forward to the realisation of the hopes expressed by the noble Duke that the colony in this case will be equal to its responsibility. It is impossible to get rid of the hardship altogether, but you can do something to mitigate it.

Two precautions suggest themselves naturally. One is that a sufficient amount of country should be reserved for the aborigines, and the other that the utmost care should be taken in the selection of the persons who are made responsible for the administration of justice. Not only should you have good and just laws, but the people who receive executive power and carry out those laws should be selected with due and sufficient care. I am afraid that some of the passages in the Report that has been quoted show that some of the subordinate officials have in this case a good deal to answer for. I venture to think that nothing but good can come from this discussion. I believe that the most rev. Primate's words will find an echo far beyond the walls of this House, and that the result of the debate can scarcely fail to tend towards the redress of the great evils that have been disclosed.

***EARL SPENCER**: My Lords, I have heard with great satisfaction the speech of the noble Marquess, who stands in a peculiarly difficult position in such a matter as the exponent of the views of this country to other nations. What the noble Marquess has said will be echoed all over the country and will emphasise the responsibility of all who are entrusted with the duties of government for carrying on administration in a manner that will not impede the efforts of His Majesty's Government to check cruelty towards native races in other lands. This debate will, I think, show our colonists that their actions are followed here with the greatest possible interest, and in some cases with anxiety; and I trust that the instances of grievous wrong-doing to the natives of Western Australia will now cease, and that the aborigines in that region will be governed in a humane, just, and generous way.

House adjourned at Eight o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 9th May, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE AND THE ABSENCE OF THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. SPEAKER and of the CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JEFFREYS, the Deputy-Chairman, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS [LORDS (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, originating in the Lords, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.: — Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water Company Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

Hessle Gas Bill [Lords]; Holy Trinity, Portsea, Bill [Lords]. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Clyde Navigation (Reconstitution) Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed.

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 4) BILL.

" To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to Kilrush (Rural), Londonderry, and New Ross," presented by Mr. Attorney - General for Ireland; supported by Mr. Walter Long; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 206.]

ULSTER AND CONNAUGHT LIGHT RAILWAYS BILL.

Petition for additional Provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Southampton and Winchester Great Western Junction Railway (Abandonment) Bill, without Amendment.

Brompton, Chatham, Gillingham, and Rochester Water Bill, with Amendments.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, " An Act to authorise the construction of new railways and works and the acquisition of lands by the Great Central Railway Company in connection with their undertaking; the acquisition of additional lands and the execution of works by the Cheshire Lines Committee and the Manchester, South Junction, and Altrincham Railway Company respectively in connection with their respective undertakings; the acquisition by the Great Central Railway Company of the undertakings of the Wigan Junction Railways Company and the Liverpool, St. Helen's, and South Lancashire Railway Company; the incorporation of a Joint Committee of the Great Central and London and North Western Railway Companies; and for other purposes." [Great Central Railway Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, " An Act to extend the time limited for the construction of works authorised by the Dearne Valley Railway Act, 1897; to authorise alterations in such works; to confer further powers upon the Dearne Valley Railway Company; and for other purposes." [Dearne Valley Railway Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, " An Act to dissolve the University College of Sheffield; and to transfer all the property and liabilities of the University College of Sheffield to the University of Sheffield; and for other purposes." [Sheffield University Bill [Lords.]

Great Central Railway Bill [Lords]; Dearne Valley Railway Bill [Lords]; Sheffield University Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

FRANCHISE AND REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.

Petitions in favour; from East Bristol; and Horfield and Bishopston; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Glasgow (three); Lanark; Perth; and Saltcoats; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL TAXATION.

Petition from Whitehaven, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petition from Hastings, against; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS (SUNDAY) BILL.

Petition from Birmingham, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Glasgow; Huddersfield (two); and Scottish Women's Liberal Federation; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NAVAL EXPENDITURE (GREAT BRITAIN AND FOREIGN COUNTRIES).

Return [presented 8th May]; to be printed. [No. 155.]

ULTIMUS HÆRES (SCOTLAND) (ACCOUNT AND LIST OF ESTATES).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 3rd May; *Mr. Victor Cavendish*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 156.]

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3365 and 3366 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TAMIL CHILDREN (EDUCATION).

Copy presented, of Papers relating to the Education of immigrant Tamil Coolie Children employed on Estates in Ceylon [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Irish Education—Infringement of Rule 127 (b) at Newmarket, County Cork.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that Mr. J. D. Lynam, national school inspector, lately visited Newmarket (county Cork) male national school, and reported that he found the Rule 127 (b) broken by the enrolment of two children of under eight years of age on March 28th, and that the teacher acted under the written directions of the manager; and, in view of his statement in this House in respect to postponement or possible withdrawal of said rule, he will say on whose authority Inspector Lynam made this report.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I am informed that the inspector made no report of the character mentioned in this Question. It is true he found that two boys under eight years of age had recently been enrolled, but he did not draw attention to the fact. On the contrary, he stated to the manager and to the teacher that in his opinion Rule 127 (b) did not apply to the school, inasmuch as the adjoining school was not a "suitable" school within the meaning of the rule.

Clubs registered during January, 1905, under the Licensing Act.

Mr. NOLAN (Louth, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state the number of clubs registered during the month of January this year in compliance with the provisions of the Licensing Act, 1902, Part III.; the name of the borough, county borough, or county petty sessional division in which the said clubs are situated; the objects and number of members of each of the said clubs; the terms of subscription; and the hours of opening and closing of the club premises.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) I am unable to give more than the numbers of the clubs registered; and on this point information is not yet available for the present year outside London. I am informed that in the Metropolitan police district, 990 clubs have been registered this year, and in the City of London, 59. For the year 1904, the figures were: Metropolitan police district, 1,026; City, 59; other English police districts, 5,186; Welsh, 191. Total, 6,462. For details as to the localities in which the clubs are situated the Annual Report of the Constabulary Inspectors for the year 1903–4 (which will be published very shortly) may b consulted.

County Licensing Committees.

Mr. HELME (Lancashire, Lancaster): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that in some counties the position and powers of additional members appointed by non-county boroughs to serve on county licensing committees under Section 5 (5) of the Licensing Act, 1904, are made to differ from those of ordinary members of such committees; and, if so, will he, in such cases, take steps to prevent it.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) I have not in mind any case in which an exception is being made from the provisions of the Act in regard to this matter. The powers and duties of the borough members are defined by the enactment quoted, which provides that any justice appointed thereunder shall, for the purposes of the determination of any question as to the refusal of a licence and any matters consequential thereon, be deemed to be an additional member of the committee.

Road Accidents Returns—Distinction between Accidents Caused by Motor-propelled and Horsedrawn Vehicles.

MR. BROOKE ROBINSON (Dudley): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Returns annually made by coroners distinguish in the case of road accidents those caused by motor-propelled vehicles from those caused by horse-drawn vehicles; and, if no distinction is made, whether he will direct coroners in future to do so.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) The annual Returns made to me by coroners do not distinguish between accidents caused by horsed and those caused by motor vehicles. They do not even distinguish road accidents from other accidental causes of death, their object being merely to exhibit the legal aspect of the cause of death, *i.e.*, murder, suicide, accident, etc. The distinction suggested could not, I think, be made appropriately in the Return.

Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Parish of Uig, Island of Lewis.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Lord-Advocate if he will state why the report of the medical officer of health for the parish of Uig, Island of Lewis, is not included with the reports of other medical officers in the current report of the county medical officer of health for Ross and Cromarty.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) The report of the medical officer of health of Uig had not been received by the county medical officer of health at the time of his annual report going to press, but in any case the publishing of the parish reports in the county reports is a matter within the discretion of the county medical officer.

Sums paid to Highland Crofting Counties out of the Equivalent Grant—Reduction under the Education (Scotland) Bill.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Lord-Advocate if he will state what sum was paid last year to each county council in the Highland Crofting Counties out of the Equivalent Grant; and will he state approximately to what extent the sum paid to each of these councils will be diminished if the clause in the Education (Scotland) Bill dealing with this grant becomes law.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) As the hon. Member is aware, the amount of the Equivalent Grant varies from year to year. On last year's basis, the figures are as follows:—

Name of county.	Amount paid to county out of Equivalent Grant for 1903–4.	Amount which would have been paid if the provisions of the Education (Scotland) Bill had been law.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Argyll	1,931 6 8	1,186 11 2
Caithness	664 7 4	405 3 4
Inverness	2,039 0 1	1,252 14 1
Orkney	573 9 6	352 6 6
Ross and Cromarty	1,854 6 9	1,139 5 1
Sutherland	631 9 8	387 19 6
Zetland	533 4 11	327 12 3

Suggested Extension of the Benefits of the Crofters' Act, 1886, to small Leaseholders.

Mr. WEIR: To ask the Lord-Advocate whether he has received a copy of a resolution carried recently at a meeting of crofters at Mulbine, Black Isle, Ross-shire, urging that the benefits of The Crofters' Act, 1886, should be extended to small leaseholders, and that the Crofters' Commission should be empowered to enlarge existing holdings, and to create new ones out of lands scheduled in the Report of the Deer Forest Commission; and, if so, will he state what action he proposes to take in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) A resolution has recently been received by the Secretary for Scotland from the crofters at Mulbine to the effect stated in the Question, but legislation will be necessary to give effect to it, and the Secretary for Scotland does not contemplate introducing any legislation on this subject.

Education (Scotland) Bill—Meeting Places of Provincial Councils.

Mr. WEIR: To ask the Lord-Advocate whether he is aware that in the Education (Scotland) Bill which was brought before Parliament last year, provision was made for Inverness to be one of the four places at which the proposed provincial councils would meet; and, in view of the fact that the County Council of Ross and Cromarty, at their meeting on the 2nd instant, protested against St. Andrews being substituted for Inverness, will he consider the expediency of falling in with the views of the county council on the subject.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) I may refer the hon. Member to what I said on this matter on the Second Reading of the Bill.

Southport Telegraph Office.

Mr. MARSHALL HALL (Lancashire, Southport): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that an officer has been brought from Keighley to fill a vacancy in the Southport telegraph office; and, if so, whether, seeing that at the present time there are several fully-qualified learners in the Southport office awaiting appointment, the senior of whom has now been in the service nearly five years, he will explain why one of such fully-qualified learners was not appointed to the vacancy.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The officer transferred from Keighley filled a vacancy for a man at Southport, and the senior male learner at Southport had less than two years service at the time when the vacancy was filled. The learner at Southport to whom the hon. Member refers as having been in the service for nearly five years is a female, and I regret that, owing mainly to the falling off in telegraph business, it has not yet been practicable to give her an established appointment at Southport. She has, however, been offered appointment at several other offices in the same district which she has declined. I will, however, consider whether the circumstances now admit of her being appointed at Southport.

Postage on Ross and Cromarty Rate Demand Notes.

Mr. WEIR: To ask the Postmaster-General if he will state on what ground the rate demand notes sent out by the county collector for Ross and Cromarty, which have hitherto been charged one halfpenny postage, are now charged one penny; and will he consider the expediency of arranging for the halfpenny rate to be reverted to.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) As I informed the hon. and gallant Member for St. Andrews Burghs on the 12th† of last month, the change of practice referred to was made in connection with the revision of the halfpenny post regulations in January, 1904. It was found that attempts were made to pass under the previous regulations many documents to which it was never intended that the preferential rate should apply, and the privilege of sending notices (other than those which conformed to the conditions applicable to circulars) at the halfpenny rate was accordingly restricted to officers of a Court of justice. I am sorry that I do not see my way to alter the decision then arrived at.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxliv., 1399.

Speed of Motor-Cars.

Mr. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): To ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will, in the interests of the public safety, withdraw the circular letter from the Local Government Board of November 20th to all the local authorities, limiting the discretion of public bodies with reference to the speed of motor-cars.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) At present it does not appear to me to be necessary to withdraw the circular referred to. I may point out that the circular does not limit the discretion of local authorities. All it does is to indicate that in the opinion of the Local Government Board speed limits under Sections 8 and 9 of The Motor-Car Act, 1903, should not be readily imposed until it is found that the provisions of the Act which render liable to severe penalties motorists who drive recklessly or negligently or at a speed or in a manner dangerous to the public are insufficient and require to be reinforced by action under those sections.

Lincoln Typhoid Fever Outbreak—Suggested Official Inquiry.

Mr. JACOBY (Derbyshire, Mid.): To ask the President of the Local Government Board if he intends to send an official to hold an inquiry at Lincoln into the recent serious epidemic of typhoid fever.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) A medical inspector of the Local Government Board visited Lincoln, and investigated the causes of the outbreak referred to. I am not prepared to direct any further official inquiry on the subject.

Appointment of Assistant Engineers in the Indian Public Works Department.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will reconsider the Circular of November, 1904, regarding the appointment of assistant engineers in the Public Works Department of the Government of India; and whether, looking to the race equality enjoined in the Regulating Act of 1833, and in the Queen's Proclamation of 1858, he will modify the condition contained in Section 4, which requires that all candidates shall be of European descent.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The Circular relates to appointments which have to be made in order to supplement the supply of European engineers passing out from the Royal Indian Engineering College this summer, on the completion of the usual course of three years. It was open to natives of India to enter the college in 1904, under certain conditions, with a view to competing for two appointments annually in the Public Works and Telegraph Departments; and they have, moreover, the exclusive right of entering those Departments through the Indian Engineering Colleges. I see no reason, therefore, for modifying the Circular in the way proposed, but I propose that, when the college ceases to supply engineers for Indian service, the privilege which, within certain limits, natives of India have enjoyed under the college prospectus of entering the Public Works Department from this country, shall be continued.

Illegal Trawling off the Irish Coasts.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether instructions have been issued to the coastguards stationed along the Irish coast, and especially to the Kingstown, Howth, Malahide, Skerries, and Balbriggan stations, to watch and report unlawful trawling within the limits.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Instructions have been issued to all the coastguards in Ireland to report to the Department of Agriculture any breaches of the regulations relating to trawling which may come under their notice.

Trawling off the Irish Coast—Size of Meshes of Trawl Nets.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any authority has been appointed by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries in Ireland to examine and report upon the size of the meshes of trawl and seine nets so as to carry out the regulations passed to enable the escape of very small fish; and whether he is aware that trawl nets frequently hold sand and destroy numbers of small fish.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Department have issued warrants to the captain and mate of their steam cruiser "Helga," and also of the "Granuaile," which belongs to the Congested Districts Board. These warrants constitute the holders police authorities, and empower them to enforce any law, by-law, or regulation relating to sea fisheries. It is part of the duty of the coastguard to report to the Department breaches of the law regarding the size of the mesh of nets or any other matter affected by the sea fishery regulations. It is a fact that trawl nets sometimes get choked with sand when the vessels are becalmed or are moving too slowly; but the skippers in their own interests take all possible steps to prevent this from occurring.

Decay of Irish Fishery Industry.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that around the Irish coast the sailing trawlers, especially the smaller ones, have diminished in number, and that the line fishermen are gradually abandoning their occupation as they cannot earn a livelihood at it; and, if so, whether he proposes to take any action in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) It is a fact that the number of sailing trawlers on the Irish coast has been decreasing for some years past. This decrease, however, is most noticeable in the neighbourhood of Dublin, where sailing trawlers have come into direct competition with the more efficient steam trawlers. The decrease in sailing trawlers is not confined to the Irish coast. It has occurred to a much greater extent on the English coast. By-laws have been made restricting inshore trawling, which have the effect of mitigating damage likely to be done to the line-fishing industry.

Irish Fisheries—Deep-Sea and Inshore Fishering.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will cause inquiry to be made whether the alleged good supply of fish landed in Ireland is mainly obtained from steam trawlers; and whether he will cause a Return to be made of the quantity of fish obtained from deep-sea fishing as compared with that derived from inshore fishing.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Statistics of fish landed on the Irish coast are collected and are published each year in the Annual Report of the fishery branch of the Department. The statistics also deal with the methods by which the various classes of fish are caught. In the Dublin Market, which is the principal one in Ireland, more fish are landed by steam trawlers than by sailing trawlers. In Galway Bay and Dingle, which are the other most important centres of trawling, all the fish are landed by sailing trawlers. With regard to deep-sea fishing in general, the quantity of mackerel landed by boats fishing in the deep-sea is about equal to that caught close in shore by row boats. Herrings are caught to a greater extent in the inshore areas than by deep-sea fishing.

Rebuilding of Guy's School, Ballymena.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a grant has deen provisionally sanctioned by the Commissioners of National Education towards the rebuilding and extension of Guy's Schools, Ballymena; if so, will he state what steps the Commissioners have taken to satisfy themselves that a necessity for the additional accommodation intended to be provided by the rebuilding and extension of these schools exists in Ballymena.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Yes, Sir. The Commissioners satisfied themselves of the necessity for the proposed new schoolhouse by due inquiry made through one of their senior inspectors.

Grant to Cloncore School.

Mr. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Commissioners of National Education have given a grant to the new Cloncore School, where the average attendance for quarter ending 31st March was fifty-seven, and fifty-six of the pupils in attendance were withdrawn from other schools in which more than sufficient accommodation already existed, that the Waveney Applicant School, Ballymena, had ninety-one pupils under eight years of age on roll in December last, thirty-three of these were never at school before, thirty-five were withdrawn from an overcrowded school, Guy's Infants (accommodation for 155, average attendance for year with Waveney School in operation 156), and a number came from other schools outside Ballymena, that the Commissioners refuse to recognise the Waveney School upon the ground that the children in attendance were withdrawn from other schools in which sufficient accommodation already existed; and whether, in view of the fact that a grant to Waveney School was refused upon this ground, he will explain why the same objection was not made or insisted upon to the Cloncore application.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Commissioners granted aid to the new Cloncore ("Cloncore Upper") National School from May 1st, 1904. According to the inspector's report on the application for aid, dated July 2nd, 1904, fifty-six of the seventy-four pupils on the rolls came from other schools. The average attendance for the quarter ended March 31st, 1905, was fifty-seven, but what proportion of this average attendance represented children drawn from other schools cannot be stated. For the facts as to the Waveney School I beg to refer to my replies to the hon. Member's Questions of the 3rd,† 11th,† and 19th‡ April last. The cases of the Waveney and Cloncore applications are not identical. The Commissioners gave their most careful consideration to each case upon its merits, and, in the exercise of the discretion vested in them, refused aid in the one case and granted it in the other.

Guy's Free Schools, Ballymena.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a scheme has been framed under the Educational Endowments (Ireland) Act, 1885, for the government and management of the endowments in connection with Guy's Free Schools, Ballymena; and that memorials signed by Ballymena residents, protesting against the diversion of the endowments as defined in the scheme, the removal of the schools from their present site, the site on which it is proposed to rebuild, and asking an inquiry into the circumstances of the case, had been received by the educational endowments inspectors; and, if so, will he state whether it is intended, before any further steps are taken, to grant the inquiry asked for.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Answer to the first inquiry is in the affirmative. The scheme provides that the governors shall not move the school to another site without the consent of the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests. The Commissioners have not yet received an application for their consent, but when the matter comes before them they will doubtless consider any memorial which persons interested may address to them. The Educational Endowments (Ireland) Commission has long since ceased to exist. The Commissioners of Education in Ireland have received the memorial referred to but they have no control over the endowment.

Coolie Education in Ceylon—Publication of Papers.

MR. STANLEY WILSON (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will lay upon the Table the correspondence between the Government of Ceylon and the Secretary of State on the education of the children employed on estates in that colony; also copies of resolutions passed by the Committees or Commissions to which the matter has been referred, together with memoranda by members thereof, and minutes of evidence, if any, taken before such Committees.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) I will lay upon the Table a copy of correspondence on coolie education as published in Ceylon. As regards the last part of this Question, so far as I am aware the Papers referred to have not yet been presented to the Legislative Council, and

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxliv., 133, 1250.

‡ See page 589.

I am therefore unable to lay them on the Table.

Mr. STANLEY WILSON: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state on what date the last Commission on coolie education in Ceylon was appointed; and when does he expect to receive its Report.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) The Commission to inquire into educational questions in Ceylon was appointed last January, and the Governor informs me that it is expected to report some time in July.

Army Gymnasia.

Sir THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, with a view to physical development in the Army and the temporary reappointment of the inspector of gymnasia, has he yet made any definite appointment to this position; and, if so, will the curriculum be arranged in accordance with the most modern methods of instruction.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The reply to the first part of the Question is in the negative. As regards the second part of the Question the curriculum is, it is believed, arranged in accordance with the most modern methods of instruction.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

The Black Watch—Place of Training.

Mr. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state whether the 1st Battalion Royal Highlanders (the Black Watch), now stationed at Fort George is to be sent to Stobs for training; and, if so, what use is to be made of the manœuvre ground recently leased in the Inverness district for the training of troops.

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.): All Regular battalions in the Scottish Command, including the 1st Battalion Royal Highlanders, will be assembled for brigade training at Stobs about August 1st. No manœuvre ground is leased in the Inverness District, except in the vicinity of Fort George, and this land is only sufficient for company and battalion field training.

Cadet Corps.

Major SEELY (Isle of Wight): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the fact that officers of cadet battalions are required by the War Office to pass examinations, that the corps are inspected and reported on by officers of the Army, and in other respects subject to Government inspection and control, he will consider the desirability of making some grant to these corps.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Cadet battalions are already granted the monies involved in the issue to them of arms and ammunition and the cost of inspections and reports. These inspections are made at the request, and for the benefit, of the cadet organisations. The question of the grant of capitation allowances has been raised on previous occasions and it has not hitherto been held advisable to increase the assistance given to them. I am not aware of any reasons for departing from this decision.

Military Service in Nigeria.

Mr. AINSWORTH (Argyllshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will consider the advisability of allowing officers attached to military forces in Nigeria to count each year's service as two as is now the case with non-commissioned officers.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The mode of reckoning service of officers in West Africa received very careful consideration at the hands of my predecessor, who decided that no changes should be made in the system then existing. I am not aware of any grounds for departing from this decision.

The Colonial Conference.

Mr. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he has yet taken any steps to ascertain whether any of the self-governing Colonies are willing to send to the proposed Colonial Conference delegates who will be entirely free and unfettered by instructions.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): No, Sir. Such steps would be in my opinion very premature.

Establishment of a Marine Post Office on Atlantic Liners.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if it is the intention to establish a marine post office on the liners plying between England and the United States; and, if so, will he appoint those officers to the sea post office who have successfully dealt with American mails on the Dublin and Queenstown T. P. O. for a number of years, and whose experience of such work specially fits them for, and gives them a claim to, a position on the marine post office.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): The Answer to the first part of the hon. Member's Question is in the affirmative. The mails between this country and the United States will be sorted at sea by a force supplied partly by the Post Office of the United States, and partly by the British Post Office. The matter is an administrative one of a new kind. I cannot admit that any particular body of officers has a claim to the new duties, and the men selected will be those who are considered the most competent to perform this work.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Would not the people in the habit of doing this work be the most fit for it?

LORD STANLEY: Yes, probably.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the non-transference of the men now sorting mails between Queenstown and Dublin will inflict serious injury on them? Will he take that into consideration?

LORD STANLEY: No, Sir. The only consideration must be that of getting the best men I can for the work.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): Will the proposed change make any alteration in the existing arrangement for landing the American mails at Queenstown?

LORD STANLEY: No, Sir.

Members' Correspondence.

MR. BRIGG (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, as above a hundred Members of this House find it more convenient to them to have all their letters which come here redirected to their home address, he will give instructions, failing any better method that can be adopted, that Members' letters shall be delivered to them if they are on the premises, in a similar way to that which is adopted in some Foreign Houses of Parliament.

LORD STANLEY: I am not quite sure to what method of delivery the hon. Member refers, and I shall be obliged if he will give me particulars of it, in order that the question may be considered.

Vagrancy Convictions in Manchester.

MR. TOMKINSON (Cheshire, Crewe): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the fact that at the Manchester City Police Court on the 22nd April last, 135 men of all ages were charged with the offence of sleeping out at a brick croft near Moston, when about 125 of them were sent to gaol for seven days, notwithstanding that some of them stated they had work to go to if they were allowed to depart, while one or two who had means upon them were discharged; and whether he will consider the advisability of proposing some change in the law to avoid the recurrence of similar action in the case of destitute persons.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): I have made inquiry from the magistrates who dealt with these cases. They inform me that the evidence against each defendant was duly considered, and due weight given to their statements as to previous and prospective employment. In their opinion, however, the defendants who were convicted belonged to the class of persons against whom the Vagrant Act is directed. The magistrates add that on further consideration of the circumstances, and with full knowledge of the character of the defendants, they are still of opinion that the defendants did not come within the category of working men, but were tramps and beggars who did not desire work. Considerable damage had been done at the brickfield where the men were arrested. I am not prepared to propose any change in the existing law.

Underfed School Children—Liability of London Boards of Guardians.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, under the Order and Circular on the Feeding of Hungry Children, any cost incurred by London boards of guardians will be a charge on the parish Poor Law fund or on the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): The cost of relief given by a board of guardians in London is in all cases defrayed in the first instance out of their own funds; but the enactments relating to the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund provide that certain payments shall be paid to them out of that fund in respect of expenses which they have incurred for purposes therein specified. Relief of the kind mentioned in the Question would not in general come within these enactments, and consequently no payment could be made out of the fund in respect of it.

DR. MACNAMARA: Will the Government consider the desirability of making the change in the law necessary to place the expenditure on the Common Fund?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I can give no pledge.

Parents of Underfed Children—Electoral Disqualification.

DR. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether it is in the discretion of boards of guardians, under the Order and Circular of the Local Government Board on the Feeding of Hungry Children, to enforce the disfranchisement of a parent whose child in the opinion of the guardians is suffering from want of food through no fault of the parent.

MR. ARTHUR HENDERSON (Durham, Barnard Castle): I beg at the same time to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether it is intended that parents whose children are provided with meals under the powers of the recent Order shall be disfranchised on the ground of such relief.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Perhaps I may be allowed to answer these Questions together. Neither the Local Government Board nor the guardians have any authority or jurisdiction with regard to any question of disfranchisement. The receipt of parochial relief within the prescribed period is a disqualification for being registered as a voter. I am not aware that the fact of the relief being given on loan would make any difference in this respect, but whether in any particular case a person is disqualified on the ground of receipt of parochial relief is a matter for the Revising Barrister.

DR. MACNAMARA: Is not the Answer to the latter part of my Question practically in the affirmative, so that disfranchisement will occur in these cases?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Yes, so far as I am aware.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): Is the right hon. Gentleman not aware that it has been twice decided in the Law Courts that relief given in the form of loan does not disqualify.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am not aware of it.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: I will send the right hon. Gentleman the cases.

Tuberculosis Commission.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board what is the present position of the inquiry being held by the Commission on Tuberculosis;

and when the Commission may be expected to complete its inquiry and report.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I understand that the Royal Commission hope to issue a further Interim Report towards the end of the present year, but that it is not possible to say at present when the final Report will be issued.

Agricultural Rating Act—Clerical Incomes from Corn Rents.

Mr. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether clerical incomes derived, under certain Acts of Parliament, from corn rents, are entitled to the benefit of the Agricultural Rating Act.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The Act to which I think my hon. friend intends to refer is the Tithe Rentcharge (Rates) Act, 1899. Some corn rents are not rateable, but where a corn rent, whether converted into a rentcharge or not, is attached to a benefice and is rateable, the Act of 1899 applies.

Smallpox on Vessels—Quarantine Regulations.

Mr. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether there is power vested in the port authorities at Southampton and elsewhere, or in the public health authorities, to quarantine vessels upon which are persons suffering from, or suspected to be suffering from, infectious disease; if so, whether he can state why such power was not exercised in regard to the steamship "Nile," which brought cases of smallpox into Southampton, and through its passengers and crew spread the disease in various parts of England and Ireland; if there be no such power in either authority, whether he will take steps to have it vested in those charged with the preservation of public health; and whether he can state the number of persons landed from the "Nile" who have developed this disease, and also the number of those who came in contact with passengers or crew who have taken the disease, and whether any deaths have resulted.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The local authorities referred to are not empowered to quarantine vessels coming into their districts with smallpox cases on board, but if there is a person on board suffering from any dangerous infectious disorder he may be removed to hospital under a justice's order. I could not hold out any expectation that the former system of putting vessels into quarantine would be revived in this country. I understand that sixteen persons in England and Wales who were landed from the "Nile" have since developed smallpox, and that seven persons who came into contact with the passengers or crew have also developed the disease. Four cases of deaths from smallpox at Southampton have been reported to the Local Government Board as occurring since the arrival of the ship. The Board have not received any reports as to deaths from the disease at other places to which any of the crew or passengers proceeded on landing.

Mr. SCOTT-MONTAGU (Hampshire, New Forest): Was there any failure of duty on the part of the local authorities?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: No, Sir, as far as I am aware the local authorities at Southampton seem to have done their duty.

City of Winchester Motor-Car Regulations.

Mr. CAWLEY (Lancashire, Prestwich): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will state the grounds on which the Local Government Board refused the application of the corporation of the City of Winchester to limit the speed of motor-cars to ten miles an hour whilst passing through the city.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: A local inquiry was held in this case at which the application was opposed. The experience gained by the inquiries held in this and other cases led the Local Government Board to the conclusion that the regulation which under Section 9 of the Motor-Car Act, 1903, is only authorised "with a view to the safety of the public" ought not to be applied unless it was shown that the safety of the public is inadequately protected by the other provisions of the Act, and particularly by Section 1, which makes motorists liable to heavy penalties who drive "recklessly or negligently or at a speed or in a manner which is dangerous to the public." Further, that whatever case there might be for the imposition of the speed limit as regards the whole or part of any particular highway, it appeared to be impossible to hold that the safety of the public demanded that throughout the whole of such an area as the City of Winchester no motorist should under any circumstances drive his car at a speed exceeding ten miles an hour. On these grounds the Board felt unable to comply with the application of the town council.

Mr. CAWLEY: Then are we to understand that in no case will the local authority have power to regulate the speed?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: Oh, no, Sir.

Mr. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the late President of the Local Government Board only got this Bill through on the understanding that the local authorities should have jurisdiction in their area?

[No Answer was returned.]

The Valuation Bill.

Mr. BENN (Devonport): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is yet in a position to name a day for the introduction of the Valuation Bill; whether, having regard to the number, difficulty, and importance of the appeals now made in rating cases, he will be prepared in the Bill to substitute an expert tribunal for quarter sessions as the authority for determining all such appeals; and whether, seeing that in London pressure occurs in the year of quinquennial revaluation, he will consider the desirability of inserting in the Government's Valuation Bill some provision for spreading the work of revaluation over the whole quinquennium instead of concentrating it in one year.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The Answer to the first part of the Question is in the negative. I could not give any promise to comply with the proposal in the second part of it. I will give consideration to the suggestion in the last part of the Question, but the matter is not free from difficulty.

Consolidation of the Poor Law.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the guardians of 214 Poor Law Unions in England and Wales have this year adopted a resolution in favour of the Government and the Local Government Board proceeding without delay with measures for the consolidation and codification of the laws relating to the relief of the poor, and the Orders issued by his Department for the administration thereof; and what action, if any, he proposes taking in the matter.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I am aware of the resolution passed by boards of guardians on the subject referred to. I realise the advantages which would result from consolidating the law relating to the relief of the poor, but I am afraid I could not hold out any prospect of legislation on the subject during the present session. The question of consolidating the Poor Law Orders is, however, receiving attention.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE: Will the Government appoint a small Committee to inquire into the possibility of legislation?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: No, Sir, we have no such intention.

Sheep Scab in the Orkneys.

Mr. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if the existence of sheep scab has been proved to be existent or to have lately been inexistence in the Orkney Isles; and if he is not satisfied of its existence will he appoint an inspector to examine the flocks before bringing the Order into force requiring that sheep shall be dipped before shipment; if he is aware of the cost to small farmers of putting up sheep dips; and if it is proved that dipping is necessary the Board of Agriculture will erect sheep dips at convenient places where farmers can dip their sheep on paying cost of material used.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. AILWYN FELLOWES, Huntingdonshire, Ramsey): The last case of sheep scab reported to the Board from Orkney occurred in the quarter ending at Midsummer last year. It is not practicable to adopt the hon. Member's suggestion that an inspector should be sent to examine the 36,000 sheep scattered all over the Orkneys, but I hope shortly to be able to announce certain amendments to the Order, which will, I hope, remove many of the difficulties which have been anticipated. The Board have no funds at their disposal for the provision of dipping tanks or places, but, under the Diseases of Animals Act, 1903, local authorities are empowered to provide facilities for the dipping of sheep, and I have no doubt but that they will avail themselves of this power where necessary.

Thames Barrage Scheme.

*SIR CHARLES CAYZER (Barrow-in-Furness): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether his attention has been drawn to the proposed barrage for the Thames by building a dam at Gravesend which would do away with all dredging above Gravesend, keep the water in the river always at a high-tide level from Gravesend to Teddington, and increase the navigable area; whether he is aware that Sir Douglas Fox, late President Inst. C.E., from an engineering point of view, and Mr. W. J. Dibdin, late analytical chemist of the London County Council, from a sanitary aspect, have reported favourably on the scheme; and whether he will appoint experts to consider and report to the House if the scheme is practicable prior to the contemplated expenditure for dredging and improvement of the Port of London.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BONAR LAW, Glasgow, Blackfriars): The attention of the Board of Trade has been directed more than once to a proposal for a barrage across the Thames, but they are not aware that the details of a scheme have been sufficiently carefully thought out and formulated. I have also seen communications from the distinguished gentlemen referred to in the Question. I gather, however, that both Sir Douglas Fox and Mr. Dibdin made reservations of great importance. The Board of Trade do not desire to discourage the consideration of the question, and should they be satisfied that the time has arrived for an inquiry, the House may rest assured that they will not resist it. But the information at their disposal is hardly yet sufficient to enable them to recommend the spending of public money on such a report as that suggested.

*SIR CHARLES CAYZER: May I ask whether, in view of the far-reaching importance of the barrage scheme to the Port of London, the Board of Trade will be prepared, if the same is practicable, to appoint a Departmental Committee, together with Members of the House, to investigate the subject.

MR. BONAR LAW: I do not think an inquiry of that kind would be of any use without expert evidence, which would cost a great deal of money, and the Board would not be justified in recommending it until they see how such a scheme is likely to be supported by public bodies.

Lightships and Wireless Telegraphy.

MAJOR SEELY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether the work of installing wireless telegraphy on the six lightships for life-saving purposes has now been commenced; and when it is likely to be completed.

MR. BONAR LAW: The agreement with the Marconi Company has been finally settled, and the work of installation will be put in hand forthwith.

Foreign Prison-made Goods.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what is the amount of prison-made foreign goods which has been prohibited from landing under the provisions of the Prison-made Goods Act up to December 31st, 1904.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.); No goods have been prohibited from being landed nor have any further seizures been made by the Customs Department under the Act referred to since the date of my reply on July 14th† last to a Question by the hon. Member on this subject. The total value of such seizures is, therefore, still £183 4s. 0d.

Mr. Chamberlain's Room in the House of Commons.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, on whose application a private room was allotted to the Member for West Birmingham; in what capacity did the applicant apply; and when was the application made and granted.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): A room was placed at the disposal of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham at the beginning of last session on the application of the recognised Whip of the Liberal-Unionist Party.

MR. WHITLEY: Who is the recognised Whip of the Liberal-Unionist Party?

LORD BALCARRES: The recognised Whip of the Liberal-Unionist Party is the hon. Gentleman's colleague, the senior representative of the town of Halifax.

Shrewsbury Education Committee.

MR. BRIGHT (Shropshire, Oswestry): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether his attention has been called to the resolution of the Shrewsbury Education Committee that the children in non-provided schools may be taken to places of worship during school hours, the attendance at such places of worship to count as school attendance; if so, in view of the provisions of the Education Act, what action the Board of Education proposes to take in the matter.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University): I have seen the resolution referred to. The local education authority for Shrewsbury is willing in the case of voluntary schools to recognise attendance in church as attendance at school for the purpose of religious instruction on occasions which must be specified by the managers and which must not exceed twelve in number in each year. So long as the conscience clause is observed and no direction of the local education authority as to secular instruction or by-law as to school attendance is in issue, there appears to be no occasion for the Board of Education to intervene.

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University): May I ask under what provision of the Act has this authority made such a by-law?

SIR WILLIAM ANSON: Under the by-law making powers given in the Education Act of 1870.

Sanitary Accommodation in Scottish Schools.

MR. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Lord-Advocate if he will state what provision exists for ensuring reasonable inspection of the closet accommodation provided for school children, boys and girls; and if, where it is found that there is practically no accommodation, the Education Department will, by withholding grants, insist on its provision.

THE LORD-ADVOCATE (Mr. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgton): It is part of the duty of His Majesty's inspectors to report upon the closet accommodation of every school they visit. If that accommodation upon the report of the inspector is found to be defective, or if the offices are badly kept, a reduction of grant, varying from one-tenth to a half according to the gravity of the offence, may be made from the grant.

Agricultural Rating Bill—Committee Stage.

MR. LAMBERT: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when it is proposed to take the Committee stage of the Agricultural Rating Bill.

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† See (4) *Debates* cxxxviii., 23.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): To-morrow, Sir.

Government Redistribution Proposals.

MR. LAMBERT: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government intend to found legislation upon their Redistribution Resolution which will change the areas of any constituencies within the present year.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have already told the House that the Government will proceed by Resolution, and when that Resolution comes on I shall be able, on being asked, to give the hon. Gentleman further details.

French Neutrality in the Far East.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley): I beg to ask the Prime Minister a Question of which I have given him private notice, viz., whether he can make any statement to the House in regard to the situation which has arisen in the Far East by reason of the alleged violation of French neutrality by Russia on the coast of Cochin China, and as to the steps His Majesty's Government have taken with a view of averting any danger of an outbreak of war between England and France in connection with this question.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: In answer to the hon. Gentleman I have to say that the following information has been supplied to His Majesty's Government by the French Ambassador. As soon as the French Government became aware of the presence of Admiral Rozdhestvensky's squadron in Kamranh Bay, representations were sent to St. Petersburg with the result that, under orders from the Emperor himself, instructions were telegraphed to the admiral desiring him to leave Kamranh Bay, which he did at once. The Russian squadron were subsequently reported to be at Hon-kohe Bay, a few miles to the north, and Admiral de Jonquières, in command of the French station, was sent to report. He found the Russian squadron at this place, though not inside French territorial waters. Upon this the Governor of the French colony of Indo-China, who had received instructions to see that French neutrality was duly respected, sent the French Resident at Nha-trang, the French settlement nearest to Hon-kohe, with directions to ask the Russian admiral to leave. The admiral promised to do so on May 3rd. As regards the reports that the Russian squadron had received valuable assistance from the French authorities in Kamranh Bay, I am informed that there are only two Frenchmen, neither of them an official, but holders of concessions from the French Government, in that place.

MR. WYNDHAM'S RESIGNATION—PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

MR. WYNDHAM (Dover): I ask the indulgence of the House for the statement which I now wish to make of the reasons of my resignation. I regret that my health prevented me from doing so at an earlier period of the session. I have, however, Sir, nothing to say this afternoon of the interesting character which sometimes attaches to occasions of this kind. I neither differ from my late colleagues on any issue of policy, nor have I found cause to change in the smallest degree the views which I have long held and frequently expressed upon Irish administration. I think now, as I have always thought, that the maintenance of the Union is a fundamental principle of any sound Irish policy. I think now, as I have always thought, and on more than one occasion said, that the plans for what are now called devolution are, from some points of view, more open to criticism than the plan for Home Rule, since they have not even the merit of appealing to any large section of Irish opinion. I insisted on resigning, therefore, not on grounds of policy, but because certain circumstances, partly political and partly personal, convinced me that I could best help the Party to which I belong and the Government as an unofficial Member than as Secretary for Ireland. The situation both in Ireland and here became complicated, as every one knows, by personal misunderstanding and this, as is apt to happen in such cases, produced an atmosphere o rumour and suspicion.

Looking back with the wisdom born after events, I think, and am perfectly willing to say, that I have been myself in part to blame. I have always desired that Irish Unionists, and above all that Unionists in the South of Ireland, should take a more active part in social reform. I have always been aware of the great difficulties which beset them if they attempt to take such a course. The benefit of such action upon their part was abundantly seen in the passing of the Land Act. I greatly wished that they would apply themselves to other problems of a practical character. I was myself absorbed in what seemed to me practical objects upon which all sections of Irish opinion might conceivably agree—upon the housing problem, including the labourers' question, upon Poor Law administration, upon education, upon the development of transit and industry; and, Sir, I was also anxious, perhaps above all, to secure to the Irish Government a greater degree of financial elasticity in order that it might be in a better position to meet needs peculiar to Ireland. Believing that such objects can only be prosecuted under favourable conditions of political calm, I tried to maintain the spirit which had guided the Land Conference to success, in the hope that the projects I cared about and which I had in my mind might also enlist support even from those who are most sharply divided upon constitutional questions. But, Sir, I have never contemplated and I have never approved of any proposal for introducing a financial board into the administration of Irish government. And so too, Sir, with the delegation of legislative powers from this House other than for private Bills. That also I have never contemplated and never approved. I was not, therefore, at the time sufficiently alive to the probability that any body of Unionists could advance into the region of constitutional controversy where I could not follow them, nor, if they proceeded so far in that direction, refrain from expressing my dissent. I did not consequently give that attention which I now think I should have given to the earlier proceedings of the Reform Association which were reported in August last.

I had not, Sir, intended this afternoon to repeat the explanation which I have already given of the subsequent misunderstanding between myself and the Under-Secretary. Sir, misunderstandings are very rarely to be explained, and they do not occur unless men who believe that they know all that is in each other's minds are, as a matter of fact, imperfectly or inaccurately informed of what is in each other's minds. Subsequent attempts at explanation rarely lead to any satisfactory conclusion to either party; but, in view of comments which have come to my notice to-day, I wish to make the following observations. At the end of last session I did not know that the Land Conference was still in existence. I did not know that it intended to take a new name and a new lease of life; and, therefore, I did not anticipate the publication which appeared in the Press on August 31st. I paid no heed to that document. I will not, and I feel no obligation to, dwell again upon the considerations that a Minister who goes away at the end of the session in the full belief that he may safely divert attention from the cares of his office may be excused from such an admission. I do not feel called upon to offer any excuses in that respect. I do not base myself on the fact that I gave insufficient heed to that document or on the vague nature of the terms in which it was drawn up. Having read it again recently in a pamphlet which has been published I know that I could, if that were to the point, show that it would not have led me to expect the later proposals. I do not urge that, and I cannot urge that, since I did not attend to the document at the time. No copy of it was sent to me. I was not reading the Irish newspapers. I did not know then, though afterwards I did, that the leading Unionist paper published in Dublin, after studying its proposals on the spot, concluded by saying that, for the present—

> "We are content to bid the Irish Reform Association a cordial welcome and to wish success to its patriotic efforts."

The Under-Secretary wrote me a letter. I cannot produce that letter because I have not got it, and I cannot speak of it from recollection because I cannot recall it. I unreservedly accept the fact that it was written, and that in the mind of the writer it was sufficiently explicit, in view of the earlier publication, to lead me to expect the later development. I say, however, without a shadow of doubt on my mind, that I did not expect the proposals to which I objected when they appeared. This second manifesto contained concrete proposals to which I strongly objected and which I could not ignore. I at once stated my objections; and here the matter would no doubt have ended but for the fact that the Under-Secretary was cognisant of this document. As I have pointed out he was sincerely, though erroneously, under the belief that I should not object to its contents. It was inevitable that such a misunderstanding should give rise to every species of rumour and misconception as to my own action and aims. Such misconceptions, while they last, are destructive of all efforts for good. I came to the conclusion that my power of doing useful work in Ireland was at an end; and, therefore, I felt justified in pressing on my right hon. friend to accept my resignation, believing that I could best strengthen his policy and support his Government by resigning from his Government, and tendering to him, as I do again to-day, the assurance of my unwavering support as a private Member.

NEW BILL.

MOTOR-CAR (ALIEN DRIVERS) LICENCES BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the grant of Licences to Alien Motor-Car Drivers," presented by Mr. Scott, Montagu; supported by Mr. Arthur Stanley, Mr. Charles James Murray, Master of Elibank, Mr. Bright, Mr. Joseph Albert Pease, Mr. Norman, and Mr. David Morgan; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 17th May, and to be printed. [Bill 207.]

NEW MEMBER SWORN

William O'Brien, esquire, for the Borough of Cork.

GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs) rose to move—"That in view of recent events in Ireland and the revelations which caused the resignation of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover, it is in the highest degree desirable, in the public interest, that the correspondence and other information necessary to enable the House of Commons and the country to form a judgment on the policy and proceedings of the Irish Government, connected with and subsequent to the appointment of Sir Antony MacDonnell, be communicated to Parliament." He said: I know, Sir, that I shall be interpreting the feeling of every Member in the House when I say that we welcome the right hon. Gentleman back among us. I trust that if he has not fully recovered he will soon recover the complete enjoyment of good health, and I shall carry every hon. Member with me when I say that we have the most perfect appreciation and sympathy with him in the troublous times through which he has come. He will find, possibly, his own conduct and the conduct of some of his friends keenly and sharply criticised, but that criticism does not interfere with our admiration of his public qualities and of his devotion to public duty, and with our belief in his perfectly sincere desire to do what he thought was most for the interests of the country whose affairs he was administering.

I have put on the Paper a Motion which the right hon. Gentleman immediately called a Motion of want of confidence. In its form it is not a Motion of want of confidence. It is an inquiry for further information to enable us to judge whether confidence is deserved or not. But I am bound to say that, as I intend to arraign in several particulars the conduct of the Government, and especially of the right hon. Gentleman himself, I do not disclaim the title which he has himself affixed to my Motion. The Motion asks for light on a strange chapter of Irish history which extends over the last three years. It is not from mere curiosity—although curiosity would be both natural and legitimate; and even I conceive it to be the right and the duty of the House to satisfy its curiosity in any case in which the methods adopted by the Executive Government appear to deserve minute inquiry. But there is more than this.

We wish to know all about these transactions, because of the disclosures we may thereby obtain as to the real springs of Unionist action, as to the really dominant and governing influences in the Unionist Party, and as to the degree of consistency and continuity which may be found in the Irish policy of the Government.

In order to recall and get the tissue of events well before us, let us go back to the beginning. I believe that very many Members will be for the moment surprised when I recall to them the fact that in 1902 the Irish policy of the present Government was not by any means a passive, neutral, quiescent, benevolent policy. It was a policy of active repression. Coercion had been in operation since the previous spring. At the time of Sir Antony MacDonnell's appointment—I rather think the very day before that appointment was announced—the House of Commons was engaged in a debate initiated by the hon. Member who took his seat to-day, during the autumn session of that year, on the proclamation by the Government under the Crimes Act of the city of Dublin itself and of nine counties in Ireland. This had taken place after the rising of the House in August. From that day to this we have not had any adequate explanation of these proclamations. Ireland was admitted to be, even by the Chief Secretary himself, free from crime. That, at all events, was the case, and so fixed was the idea that coercion was the main policy of the Government that the chief advocates in the London Press of the forcible and anti-Irish government of Ireland actually welcomed the appointment of Sir Antony MacDonnell on that very ground. These were the words of *The Times*. After pointing out that the train was laid for an explosion of madness that might easily and rapidly pass into crime—how familiar is the language!—*The Times* continued—

> "The police should be inspired with a sense of the paramount necessity of vigilance and activity. Sir Antony MacDonnell, who in his career in India has shown that he is not a man to be trifled with, is well fitted to infuse his spirit into the force upon which the authority of the law and the defence of liberty so largely rests in Ireland."

The House will see that this is the view of the Irish Government, which was expressed, I think, by the late Chief Secretary when he indicated his satisfaction that the active influence of administration would cease to be a mere police force. But this article in *The Times* treats it as mainly a police force. Such was the state of things, and such was the expectation on all hands of the extreme Party in Ireland, represented by, I believe, seven or eight hon. Gentlemen on the bench below the gangway opposite. I find great difficulty in finding any epithet of description that would bring them upon the screen. I always try to call hon. Gentlemen by the names they themselves prefer. On that account, I speak sometimes of the Unionist Party opposite. With these hon. Gentlemen I have tried the name of Ulstermen, and I have tried "extremists," the "Ascendency Party," and so on; and really when there are eight of these hon. Gentlemen sitting opposite, I hope they will excuse me if sometimes I am rather circuitous in my reference to them. But they represent a formidable force in Ireland, and I have really great compassion with their perplexities. Very naturally they said to themselves that the Chief Secretary, who had been employing coercion since April of that year and had been taken into the Cabinet, and whose admission to the Cabinet in the same summer bore witness to the agreement between him and the Prime Minister, never dreamt of taking a new departure in the opposite direction, in which the new Under-Secretary, Sir Antony MacDonnell, was to be the central figure, at a time when the Irish Members were being thrown into gaol and the principal city and a great number of counties in Ireland were under proscription for crime. I mention this to show what a sudden, vast, and evidently intentional change there was in the policy of the Government. I am not sure of the exact date when the proclamations were withdrawn, but it was not long before the new leaven of new doctrine began to work.

The first sign came from the Viceroy less than a month after Sir Antony MacDonnell's appointment. This was Lord Dudley, who had taken the place of Lord Cadogan in Ireland, but not his place in the Cabinet. So that we had a Chief Secretary who was in the Cabinet and a Viceroy who was not. Therefore, especially as the Viceroy was in his novitiate as a public administrator, he would not speak without consulting with the Chief Secretary. And what did Lord Dudley say? He said—

> "There were those who seemed to believe that the only way in which a great Empire could be successfully maintained was by suppressing the various distinguishing elements or components; in fact, in running it as a huge regiment in which each nation was to lose its own individuality and to be brought under a common system of discipline. That was not his view. In his opinion, they were very much more likely to break up an Empire by such a method."

That was Lord Dudley's way of infusing the Royal Irish Constabulary with "the spirit necessitated by the occasion." But he said another thing even more significant. "The opinion of the Government was"—mark the words—"and it was his own opinion, that the only way to govern Ireland properly was to govern it according to Irish ideas, instead of according to British ideas." Surely in the last sentence is to be found the clue to the whole of this extraordinary entanglement. This is putting new wine into old bottles with a vengeance. Ireland was to be governed henceforth according to the wishes of the Irish people—Ireland being at that moment under the active operation of the Crimes Act; and in the opinion of the Government, so Lord Dudley said, this was the only way to govern Ireland properly. There was to be self-government in substance, though not in form. You had a Viceroy, a Chief Secretary, and an Under-Secretary in Dublin who were going to open a new era. How was this to be done? Anyone who has followed closely subsequent events knows what the plan was. We on this side of the House followed this experiment, when it became discernible, with the keenest sympathy and interest, and we were not without hopes that permanent good would come of it, and that the methods to be adopted would lead up from one stage to another in gradual logical succession to a form of government which the Irish people would accept.

The first definite sign of this new policy was when the Land Conference was convened under the chairmanship of Lord Dunraven. It was composed of leaders of the Nationalist Party and of one or two leading and representative members of the landlord Party; and let the House particularly note this—that this conference was the direct response to an announcement made by the late Chief Secretary that no scheme for effecting a settlement of the land question could be arrived at otherwise than by agreement with the people themselves. I do not wish to strain the exact words, but this was, at any rate, a direct act of delegation, and a candid avowal that no British statesman was competent to grapple with and settle this question of the Irish land. The invitation was accepted; the conference drew up a scheme; a National Convention pronounced upon it; and the Land Act, which included the main decisions of the conference, was the result. I have two remarks to make at this point. These things were not done in a corner, but under the full light of day. I never heard that the Ulster Members made it matter of complaint that the joint authors of this Act included the leaders of the Nationalist Party, or that Sir Antony MacDonnell, to whose skilful hand and resourceful diplomacy the scheme was in large measure due, had in any way exceeded his powers by putting himself at Lord Dunraven's disposal. There was nothing heard then of "Papists and rebels." My second remark is that neither the Cabinet nor the Prime Minister censured Sir Antony MacDonnell for making himself accessible to all sorts and conditions of men, or for identifying himself with the proposals known as Lord Dunraven's proposals. Happily, that conciliatory and co-operative method was attended with complete success and the Bill became law.

Now we come to the next stage. The unofficial President of this informal Irish Cabinet and the official convener of it at Dublin Castle next addressed themselves to the second question on the right hon. Member for Dover's list—namely "the realisation of Mr. Balfour's ideas on University education." Again the Chief Secretary had nothing whatever to do. In his new capacity he had only to stand at the window of the Lodge in Phœnix Park and wait for news of the wishes of the Irish people while the Under-Secretary busied himself in interviewing the leaders of Nationalist thought. In due time another

Dunraven scheme made its appearance—a scheme which seemed to meet with the general acceptance of all Parties and creeds in Ireland. It is understood that the Chief Secretary, the Viceroy, and the Prime Minister were ready to adopt it, and it only remained for Parliament to ratify that scheme, when a change came upon the scene. One of the representatives of Ulster in the Cabinet went down to Belfast and denounced the scheme. The Fellows of Trinity College broke loose; and then these charges of Sir Antony MacDonnell's collusion with the Nationalists and Catholics, and, still more terrible, his attempts to seduce the Presbyterians of the citadel, began to be noised abroad. But still not even then was there any censure of Sir Antony MacDonnell. The Cabinet, as a whole, found themselves unable to accept the proposals which he had been instrumental in formulating, but they did not tell him that he had transgressed the bounds of official decorum, or that he had failed to apprehend the views of the Cabinet on the subject. This was a serious set-back to the new policy of conciliation and co-operation, and to the theory that Ireland could only be properly governed according to the ideas of the Irish people. I would ask the House of Commons, in the light of recent disclosures, to note what it implies. The Prime Minister has this session stated that no measure for Irish University education can be introduced by a British Minister in the circumstances of the case.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): No.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The words the right hon. Gentleman used were—

> "The question is not and, as far as I can see, never again can be a Government question."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It never has been.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: By a Government measure I do not mean the familiar domestic arrangement of putting on or taking off the Government Whips. I mean a question which a British Government could not undertake to deal with. Therefore the right hon. Gentleman consented to Sir Antony MacDonnell's accepting office on condition that he and the Chief Secretary should ascertain the wishes of the Irish people on a matter which he described as vital to their welfare, and then he turns round and says, "I am sorry, I cannot help you."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No; do not use the words "turns round." I have been perfectly consistent in my innumerable speeches on this subject, and they have all been of one tone.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The right hon. Gentleman was turning round on the expectations and designs that were placed before Sir Antony MacDonnell when he was appointed Under-Secretary.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That is, as far as I am aware, quite incorrect. Sir Antony MacDonnell refers to my opinions. My opinions were contained authoritatively in a pamphlet which had a large circulation, and in that pamphlet the right hon. Gentleman can see the very statement of which he complains.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Then what was Sir Antony MacDonnell to do in the matter? What was the use of his wasting his time and his railway fares in ascertaining what people desired and thought, if all this time there was this cloud hanging over the question, so that, whatever result he might achieve, it could be of no use, because the Government could not help him, or help themselves. I cannot help thinking that this is a weak and cynical position for the Prime Minister to take up. He debars Ireland from settling its own affairs in its own way, and he now declares that he cannot settle this important matter either in his own way or in their way. I should have thought it bad from a Unionist point of view—because I wish to take a friendly view—to let it be understood that there were Irish grievances of the gravest description which no British Government could attempt to heal. For that is what it comes to. I should have thought that to take up a position of such blank and naked Nihilism as this would be going far to undermine the Unionist cause.

But now we may pass from that. We come to the third stage in this co-operative scheme. The first, as we remember, was wholly successful. The second broke down in the Cabinet. [Mr. A. J. BALFOUR dissented.] Well, a Cabinet Minister going to Ireland and making a speech condemning it shows a mischief lurking about somewhere. But now we come to the third stage—to the question of bringing the administration in Ireland into efficient working so as to win the confidence of the Irish people. The landlords' section of Lord Dunraven's Conference Committee constituted itself into an Irish Reform Association, and Sir Antony MacDonnell, with the Chief Secretary's consent, again placed himself at its disposal. There was an idea, I believe, of forming a Moderate Party with national aims and with a desire to promote the national well-being—a most proper object if it could be accomplished. There were many conversations and colloguings into which we need not go, although they are full of mystery. The scheme was promulgated, constituting a statutory body for legislative purposes, and a financial board partly elected, and at once the cry of Home Rule was raised. Sir Antony MacDonnell was charged with being a leading accomplice in a design not merely for handing the key of Dublin Castle over to the Irish people—they have some right to it, after all—but for basely betraying the cause of Unionism. Now with the merits or demerits of that scheme I do not concern myself to-day. It may have been crude and unworkable, or the reverse, but the point of cardinal importance is that these proposals are repudiated by the Government because they involve the principle of delegation and the elective principle. Ireland is to be governed according to Irish ideas—that the Viceroy has told us at the beginning of this chapter—but Irish ideas are well enough, if you like, but the moment you begin to put them in proper and regular form by invoking a direct expression of opinion then they are an unworkable heresy.

Who was it that started the mutiny against this scheme? It was the small Party of ascendency, who have so long been accustomed to secure supremacy in Ireland for their own ideas and not for the ideas of Ireland. It was they who denounced the Under-Secretary, drove the Chief Secretary from office, and forced the Prime Minister and the Party opposite into a white sheet. Sir, Governments may propose, but it is these Gentlemen who dispose. The Prime Minister may make appointments, but it is these Gentlemen who dismiss. I do not blame them. They have acted honestly and straightly according to their instincts and their interests. I do not put it in an unpleasant way. When they see a powerful Government and a great political Party flying like sheep when they give them chase how natural it is for them to make the most of their power.

Now let us try and understand in the light of all this what is the Unionist policy, what is meant by it. It is not an Irish national policy. It is not the policy which has so often been advocated in this country of governing Ireland impartially by a British Government and giving the Irish all we should give to ourselves, of giving them the same laws. How familiar we are with that programme! No, this is a policy under which a small fraction of the people use the British Government in order that the privileges of their own class may be upheld against the rights and liberties of Irishmen, and this was never more vividly shown than by the events we have before us to-day. But was there not something more when a few weeks ago this great *bouleversement* took place? For the Tory Party to be terrorised by the Ascendency Party is nothing new. They have often fled before them. But is their flight not accelerated by something in the circumstances of this movement, which lends speed to their heels? We have it, Sir, on the highest authority, yes, and concerted authority, that in their despair for their future the Government think of flying to a desperate remedy, the bogey of Home Rule. Yes, the bogey of Home Rule in order to hide the fact that their wars, their extravagancies, their class of legislation and favouritism, have brought them nothing but sickness, and irritation, and indignation. Even their latest trick of promising to delete and cancel and annul that fiscal provision which has been the keynote of our commercial prosperity, even that has only served to sow dissension among their own followers. They have misused their welcome by the country, and they have outstayed it. They are borne down by the burden of their own unpopularity, and they are bankrupt of future policy. The right hon. Gentleman amuses himself occasionally, and I assure him it amuses me to see him do so, by pointing to us and saying, "What is your policy?" I can hurl at the head of the right hon. Gentleman half-a-dozen good sound policies for the future which we accept and intend to follow.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: One would do.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I doubt whether the right hon. Gentleman has a single policy except to resist all that we should propose. But what, then, were they to do? Happy thought! Fall back upon the old scarecrow; call the Irish people rebels, and say the Empire is in danger—Ah! it is too late! But, Sir, it is too old. That will not do twice. In the meantime your own Land Act and your own Local Government Act forbid you the use of this scarecrow. But at least you could save yourselves from being caught—your Under-Secretary and Chief Secretary, and the rest—caught in the very act of conspiring and constructing a new Constitution in co-operation with the very men whom, in order to construct your bogey, you must denounce as knaves and traitors. Therefore, at all hazards, pacify the Ulstermen; put away this new policy of Irish ideas, so wise, as we think, so necessary, so promising a policy; rebuke one of your agents, and dismiss, discard the other—that is the Unionist Irish policy.

Now I wish to say a word or two on the circumstances of the resignation of the right hon. Member for Dover, and of Sir Antony MacDonnell's retention. We have been walking among mysteries, and we do not gather much from the statement of the right hon. Gentleman. I do not think that he said anything which would alter our opinion on the main question. His own personal action may have been misunderstood by those with whom he acted; with that we have little to do; but the broad lines remain untouched by anything he said. What is the main question we have to consider? It is not why the late Chief Secretary resigned; it is why the Prime Minister accepted his resignation. It is difficult to reconcile the Prime Minister's account with that given in this House by the right hon. Member for Dover and that given in another place by Lord Lansdowne. There are two contradictory views on which the whole thing turns of Sir Antony MacDonnell's *status* and therefore of his delinquency. The first is that his position was quite exceptional and that therefore he was not to blame for associating himself with Lord Dunraven's reform movement, but that he was guilty of an error of judgment in failing to perceive the point at which the proceedings of Lord Dunraven and his friends fell, so to speak, under the ban; the point at which they passed beyond the pale of what is called Unionist policy. That is the view of Lord Lansdowne and of the right hon. Member for Dover. It is surprising, I think, that they should have joined in stigmatising as indefensible a mistake of such a character, all the more when he who committed the mistake was known to them to be a Liberal and an Irishman with Irish sympathies. But the other view is that Sir Antony MacDonnell enjoyed no privileges beyond those enjoyed by every Civil servant at the head of a department, and that his *status* was precisely that of a similar official in the Local Government Board or the Home Office. This is the Prime Minister's view. He says—

> "Sir Antony MacDonnell was censured because in connection with the Dunraven scheme he had exceeded the bounds laid down by the particular rules, and, what is even more important, the ordinary practice of the Civil Service."

And this it was which was called indefensible and received a sweeping rebuke. The House is familiar with the terms of the appointment, the conditions on which it was made. If the Prime Minister ever read the cipher letter of the Chief Secretary before telegraphing and writing his concurrence, it left no definite impression upon his mind. Nothing unusual, he said, had occurred; it might happen in any office. We have it from his own mouth that as respects the policy and the conditions of the appointment there has been much ado about nothing. All we ask him now is to explain why, if that is so, he accepted the resignation of the Chief Secretary. On his own theory, how does he justify accepting that resignation? If nothing in this appointment differentiated it from others and the one solitary cause of trouble was a slip on Sir Antony MacDonnell's part for which he had been admonished, was it not a natural thing to let bygones be bygones? The Prime Minister said on February 22nd—

> "The episode, which we all regret, was due to a misapprehension. Cannot we bury it in oblivion—this episode which, while it reflects discredit on nobody, gives pain to some."

That was on February 22nd, yet on March 6th he announces the Chief Secretary's resignation because this insignificant and forgettable episode destroys his usefulness. Why did he not tell the Member for Dover when he came to him with his inept and quixotic offer to resign —which on this theory it was—that he wholly misunderstood the situation, that the incident was closed, the offence was condoned, that his resignation had no shadow of justification, and that it would constitute a grotesque miscarriage of justice and give rise to great embarrassments and misconceptions? The right hon. Gentleman said he was unable to resist the appeal of the Chief Secretary. He told us that on March 6th, but in the "Political Notes" in *The Times* on March 3rd I read this—

> "Mr. George Wyndham, M.P., replying yesterday from Clouds, near Salisbury, to a telegram from one of his Dover constituents, says the report is not correct that he will resign the Irish Secretaryship or succeed Lord Selborne at the Admiralty."

There is no great sign of insistence on the resignation in this disclaimer two or three days before the announcement of his retirement was made. On March 6th it had become so serious that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister could no longer resist his appeal. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover gave a forecast of his resignation during the debate on the Address, when he spoke with the frankness which distinguishes him. He said his view was that the Government ought to try to make the best of the situation, always subject to the Union.

> "Because," he continued, "I have followed that view I have exposed myself in some quarters to a great deal of hostile criticism. If because I have held that view I am to be condemned, I shall accept the condemnation and leave the Ministry."

Why, however, has he resigned? Because the Under-Secretary had overstepped the bounds of his office. But then let us assume for a moment that the Prime Minister admitted to the then Chief Secretary what he has not admitted to the House, that political considerations did enter into the question. Suppose he was influenced by the Chief Secretary's plea that a great experiment had been reduced to ruins. Was it not then for the Prime Minister either to tell him that the new policy was not dead, but was to be persisted in in spite of the narrow Ulster opposition, or else to insist that if the Chief Secretary resigned he himself, as jointly responsible for the venture, must accept his share of the liability for the catastrophe, and himself resign also?

I turn for a moment to Sir Antony MacDonnell—to consider his position. He has been condemned for an indefensible political error. At what date—and it is necessary if we are to understand the matter that these facts should be known—did the Cabinet come to this decision, what were the terms of the censure, and what representations did Sir Antony MacDonnell make either before or after his condemnation? The public censure of a great Civil servant is not an everyday occurrence. I think we ought to know something of the trial and the defence as well as of the judgment. Let me say I have never seen Sir Antony MacDonnell in my life, and am not entitled, qualified, or desirous to speak in any way for him; but surely considering his past career and the circumstances in which he undertook these duties it is neither fair to him nor becoming in the Government themselves to administer and publish this resounding rebuke and at the same time withhold his own statement of defence from the light of day.

The treatment of Sir Antony MacDonnell seems equivocal, but what are we to say of the Viceroy? Lord

Dudley has served Ireland well; he has not spared himself in any respect in her service; and now that he has been detected in the crime of high treason against Unionist policy, he is rewarded by being told by the Prime Minister, "Oh, the Viceroys! The Viceroys are nothing. Viceroys may think and say what they please in the obscurity of their existence outside of the Cabinet." The House of Commons well knows, and even regards with some little admiration, the dexterity with which the Prime Minister extricates himself from a predicament. But, after all, we have to deal with the facts, and the Viceroy remains in Dublin. He is to occupy a certain position, to maintain relations with the Chief Secretary and the Under-Secretary, even if the Cabinet and the Prime Minister are not aware of his existence. But what a situation is this? The Viceroy, who has made no secret of aiding and abetting the Under-Secretary in his crimes against the Union, the Viceroy, who has leanings towards a statutory body—fancy, what a dreadful thing!—and a financial board, partly elective; the Chief Secretary who regards these opinions as altogether impossible and disbelieves most fervently in anything of the sort; and the Under-Secretary, who has been caught in the Act and censured with severity—there is a happy family for you! From one's heart one pities the new Chief Secretary, who lives in Dublin Castle with a political suspect on the left hand and on the right, and a chief in London who regards the whole question as antiquarian and belated. As one considers this remarkable trinity of Irish administration I confess I cannot believe we know the whole story. That feeling is deepened when we look across the House and see sitting in an unaccustomed place the man who by his own showing is as untainted with any of these heresies as the Prime Minister himself.

The House will be pleased to know I come to my last point.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Hear, hear!

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: What is the policy of which Sir Antony MacDonnell—this is a most important matter—was to be the permanent administrator under the new Chief Secretary? We have had distant and ominous mutterings of coercion. I hope there is no foundation for them, but if this new and hopeful policy which has been attempted is to be snapped short off and Ireland is to be given to understand that the present system of government or no government is all she will get, what is the good of telling others, as the Chief Secretary is doing from day to day, that law and order were the first condition of civilised life. You have admitted yourselves that Ireland is badly governed. You have sent a Viceroy to proclaim a better way; you have ransacked the Empire for an administrator of a sympathetic turn, whom the Irish people might recognise as in a new and peculiar degree responsible to them; you have inaugurated by your legislation with regard to land and local government the view that the Irish people are worthy of confidence and capable of discharging large administrative responsibilities; by every means short of the elective principle and delegation you have sought for a brief time to give Ireland a taste of self-government; and now you are going to slide back into your old function as a mere police force. Do you suppose you can conceal from the British people the real lesson of this experience by representing Ireland in the old colour of a lawless and disloyal country? What a childish expectation! The people are beginning to understand the truth about Ireland, have begun and advanced pretty well in learning the truth about Ireland. When they see standing in the dock together the Chief Secretary, whose dreams have been shattered, the Viceroy, who has been treated with such disdain, and the Under-Secretary, who has been rebuked as no Civil servant ever was rebuked before in our time, they will suspend judgment against the people of Ireland, and they will ask which are the separatists—the Party which in the name of Unionism has promised, and flattered, and cajoled, and abandoned Ireland, faithless to their own traditional principles—if you dignify them by such a word—and faithless also to the expectations they have themselves reasonably created; or the Party which seeks, and believes it will bind the countries together by finding a means for the satisfaction of Ireland's aspirations, for the removal of those manifold evils under whose influence Ireland is wasting away.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in view of recent events in Ireland, and the revelations which caused the resignation of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover, it is in the highest degree desirable, in the public interest, that the correspondence and other information necessary to enable the House of Commons and the country to form a judgment on the policy and proceedings of the Irish Government, connected with and subsequent to the appointment of Sir Antony MacDonnell, be communicated to Parliament."—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Mr. WILLIAM O'BRIEN (Cork) said he had listened with deep and sincere sympathy to the loyal and touching effort made by the Member for Dover to bring himself—he would not say to force himself—into harmony with the speech of the Prime Minister before the Primrose League. He joined heartily with the Leader of the Opposition in saying that it was impossible to listen to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman without feeling regretful that a brilliant career had been somewhat roughly, and he thought unfortunately, interrupted, but they were all at one in the hope and the belief that it was only interrupted, and that it would not be interrupted for a very lengthened period. There were portions of the speeches already delivered which left upon his mind an uneasy impression that the debate was likely to degenerate into an English Party fight at the expense of Ireland. Most Members would feel that Sir Antony MacDonnell was badly treated by his colleague the Member for Dover; the Member for Dover also was badly treated by the Prime Minister and very markedly by his successor; and there were others nearer home who perhaps had not been altogether too chivalrously treated by their colleagues. If they had been treated otherwise, and if things had been going on in Ireland as well to-day as at the time of the Land Conference, it was possible that the present debate would not have come on, because Sir Antony MacDonnell would never have been thrown over. But these personal questions were very minor matters. The substance of the debate was that a policy which might have yielded, and to a large extent had yielded, great blessings to Ireland, and perhaps in no lesser a degree to England, was tried and defeated not by the action of any one man or section, but by a most unfortunate and unhappy concatenation of forces, follies, and misapprehensions, from the responsibility for which no Party could claim to be altogether exempt.

If the debate was to serve any useful purpose, its real object should be not to toss recriminations and taunts across the floor of the House, but to recognise that they had to go back to the position in which they stood eighteen months ago, before either Party or country could hope to recover the ground they had lost in the matter of clearing away the miseries that attended the Irish nation. Personally he was not able to approve entirely of the action of any Party in the House, nor could he condemn entirely the action of any Party. There was, however, one exception, as with his whole heart he could condemn the action of the Gentlemen from the Ulster corner. In the regrettable absence of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Armagh, the leadership of that section devolved—if he might use that dangerous word—upon the hon. Member for North Antrim, who at one time did not disdain to be the private secretary of the Member for Dover. He thought the Leader of the Opposition paid far too much attention to the Gentlemen from Ulster, because it would have mattered very little what they did if both English Parties and perhaps some Members who were not Englishmen had been a little wiser in this matter. The debate, however, ought to proceed upon other principles than these personal considerations.

He did not think that any fresh evidence was needed as to the understanding on which Sir Antony MacDonnell went to Ireland. They had evidence enough in the speeches of Lord Landsowne and the Member for Dover, in

Sir Antony MacDonnell's letters, and in the undeniable fact that the Prime Minister was at the time apprised of what was going on and approved of every step that was taken. He knew the kind of man Sir Antony MacDonnell was, and he was glad to get him for the task before him. A great deal of trash had been spoken about the crime of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover in describing the Under-Secretary as a colleague. Everybody who knew Ireland was aware that the Under-Secretary was, in substance and in fact, a colleague of the Chief Secretary; in most cases he was the more important of the two, and he strongly suspected that he was the predominant partner even under the haughty and iron rule of the new Chief Secretary. If Sir Antony MacDonnell had only gone to Parnassus by going to Mount Stewart instead of to county Galway, if he had placed the Irish police indiscriminately at the service of the Irish landlords, or had used his patronage at Dublin Castle to suit the book—of course in a constitutional way—of the hon. and learned Member for North Antrim and his friends, precious little would have been heard of the humbug about the crime of the Chief Secretary in describing him as a colleague.

If he might say so without disrespect, he did not attach very much importance to what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover had most loyally stated to-day. They were on the eve of a general election, and the Irish policy was down in the dust. This was not a reproach addressed to the Member for Dover or to the Prime Minister exclusively, for these things were the mere by-play of Parliamentary debate. The Member for Dover and the Prime Minister, when Sir Antony MacDonnell went over to Ireland, unquestionably had an open mind and kept an open door; and he was perfectly certain that Sir Antony MacDonnell was sent over to Ireland to abolish Irish landlordism, to settle the University question, and to recast the government of Ireland. Whether they called it reorganisation or devolution did not matter; he preferred to call it evolution. As to the first of these three objects, it was now admitted that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover and Sir Antony MacDonnell were brilliantly successful. They did not call it the abolition of landlordism, but that it most certainly was, and they carried it out with the consent of both Parties in this House and in the other House, with an astonishing spectacle of unanimity between the two countries. That was not the victory of any one Party, and in Ireland they did not strive to make it a Party victory. He had been taunted with proposing a vote of confidence in Dublin Castle, but the resolution which was unanimously adopted by the directorate of the United Irish League with the Leader of the Irish Party in the chair was as in the following terms—

> "That while the Act as placed on the Statute-book falls short in various important particulars of the recommendations of the Land Conference and the requirements of the National Convention, and cannot without amendment effect the entire extinction of landlordism within a reasonable time, we cordially recognise that the Amendments demanded by the National Convention have been conceded in Committee to an extent to which no great Government measure in relation to Ireland has ever before been modified in deference to the demands of Irish public opinion, and we think it a duty to make free acknowledgment that next to the exertions of a united Irish Parliamentary Party under the leadership of Mr. Redmond, and of Mr. T. W. Russell, Ulster tenant righters, that happy result is to be traced to the wisdom and active goodwill displayed by that section of the landlord leaders who made the Land Conference possible, and the loyalty with which Mr. Wyndham and his associates in the Government of Ireland endeavoured to make good his pledges to give legislative effect to the recommendations of that conference as well as to the high public spirit with which the Liberal Party resisted the temptation to extract any Party advantage from the situation."

That was called a vote of confidence in Dublin Castle, and it had been quoted as justification for launching a combination for the destruction of the policy then adopted. Instead of being a vote of confidence in Dublin Castle that resolution was a vote of thanks to a united Ireland and a united England! In fact, a vote of thanks to the United Kingdom, if ever there was one, for passing what he considered the first stage in a policy which would put an end for ever to the methods of Dublin Castle. He did not wait for that resolution to express his own sense of admiration and thankfulness for the part which had been played in this matter by the Liberal Party and their Leader, who had never wavered. He expressed humbly what he felt as to the attitude of the Liberal Party and the attitude of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose Burghs, of the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Berwick, and the hon. Member for Battersea. If the suggestion which the hon. Member for Montrose made on that occasion had only been accepted in its fulness, that settlement would have gone through like clock-work. Nobody found fault with the Member for Dover or with Sir Antony MacDonnell for the passing of the Purchase Act. Everybody lauded him and glorified him because the land question which was then put on the road to a settlement was by far the heaviest and the thorniest of the three questions on the programme of Sir Antony MacDonnell.

The University question was an infinitely easier one, and the moment his hon. friends opposite, who seemed to be troubled with bad dreams about the Pope and the Bishop approached this question in a broad spirit, that moment they would be convinced that they were as much astray upon the University question as they were upon the land question. The constitution of a national University that would satisfy all reasonable people in Ireland was a very light proposal compared with the question which the Land Conference had to face, of getting at a price which would satisfy both landlords and tenants. It was enough for them that those negotiations took place, and his only regret was that they had failed. The Leader of the Opposition had quoted the Prime Minister's statement, that no Government could hope to pass a University Bill under the present circumstances. That was what was said by the Member for Dover in regard to the land question. All that he needed to say was that whereever the fault lay most unquestionably it did not lie with the masses of the Irish people. The situation had been wholly changed from the unanimity and cordiality which had enabled the Land Purchase Act to be passed. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover no longer had Ireland at his back, and the policy of conciliation was being trampled out. The hon. Gentlemen from the Ulster corner had got their opportunity of bringing in ignorance, stupidity, and bigotry, and they had done so. If they had been a little wiser they could have settled the University question without the aid of those Gentlemen, just as they had managed to settle the land question without the assistance of the landlords.

With regard to the third of the items in this programme, about which all this empty and factious storm had been raised, he thought all hon. Members in the House, if they would only confess it, would agree that they ought never to have had that indefensible vote of censure passed by the Cabinet on Sir Antony MacDonnell. To that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover had made no answer and could make no answer. He certainly ought to have written his letter to *The Times* after Lord Dunraven's association had published their first manifesto, because it was perfectly certain that that manifesto indicated the main lines of the devolution scheme every bit as emphatically as the subsequent scheme. The late Chief Secretary knew then that Sir Antony MacDonnell was in communication with Lord Dunraven, and he ought to have known that *The Times* newspaper was every other day publishing leading articles crying out that this devolution scheme was Home Rule in disguise, and asking the late Chief Secretary to repudiate it. He did not repudiate it, however, until it was found that the devolution scheme was denounced, not merely in the northeast corner of Ulster, but by every Party in Ireland and by the Nationalist newspapers. After two years' absence he was only claiming the right of expressing his views upon an important question and he hoped he was not giving offence to anybody. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover did not make the repudiation until the Nationalist newspapers and some of the most important representatives in the country denounced devolution at least as violently as the orators on the other side of the House. The late Chief Secretary made an observation that evening which threw a very great deal of light on what really happened. The right hon. Gentleman stated that he objected to devolution even more than to Home Rule, because he found that it commanded the approval of no section. It was natural that he should come to that conclusion. He saw that devolution had no friends in Ireland, and very naturally he came to the conclusion that he himself would soon have no friends in the Cabinet. The right hon. Gentleman then committed what the hon. Member thought was the one mistake in his Irish career. He struck his flag to Lord Londonderry, to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor-General for England, and to the minor Irish lawyers. He separated himself from Sir Antony MacDonnell instead of gladly associating himself with him to the end in a policy which had been gloriously successful, and which, he believed, would be yet gloriously successful. It would be easy to find strong language to describe that mistake, and perhaps to describe the apologetic tone of the right hon. Gentleman's statement that evening, but he confessed, looking back on his experience of politicians on both sides of the House for the last quarter of a century, and remembering how, on the Irish question especially, nothing succeeded like success, and nothing failed like failure, he did not know half-a-dozen men on either side of the House who were entitled to cast the first stone at the Member for Dover if, finding he had no friends in Ireland, he hesitated to part with his friends in England. He went further than that and said that, to his mind, it would be one of the most unscrupulous things a statesman ever did if the Member for Dover, or if the Prime Minister, were to endeavour to make out of the situation in Ireland the material for an anti-Irish or anti-Home Rule cry at a general election. On the other hand, he said that he thought any endeavour of the Nationalist Members to keep the Member for Dover or the Prime Minister to Home Rule, in their sense of the word, on the strength of Sir Antony MacDonnell's appointment, would be equally undesirable. He said that most emphatically.

As to what were their first notions of the remedy for the admitted breakdown of government in Ireland—because that was the basis on which all this thing proceeded, when the present system of government by the admission of the other side and his side had hopelessly become antiquated and indefensible—what were their first notions of what the remedy for that government might be, the only fault he found with his friends on his side was that they did not give more time and more fair play for these first notions to develop favourably, as unfortunately they had since developed adversely. Although they were as far from Home Rule in the full Nationalist sense of the term as he was from being a devolutionist in the sense of Lord Dunraven's present scheme, merely because he was perfectly willing to chat matters over in a friendly way he had never concealed from anybody what to him was as clear as daylight, that it was all nonsense to speak of any final settlement of the question of Irish government until this House devolved upon an Irish Parliament the management of purely Irish affairs under a Ministry responsible to the Irish people. On that point there was not a shadow of difference on the Nationalist Benches, but when prominent Unionists and fellow-countrymen invited them to an inquiry as to the best method of recasting the government of Ireland on the basis of delegating to an Irish statutory body legislative functions in connection with Irish affairs, then he for one had not the least notion of repelling them, and had not the smallest hesitation in entering into friendly discussion with them through any exaggerated apprehension that the seductions of Irish Lords or English Cabinet Ministers might tempt him from the straight path—and, of course, he presumed that the Lords and Cabinet Ministers had a still poorer opinion of any humble seductions of his friends and himself. Devolution, like Home Rule, might mean anything until they got particulars. For instance, in the Nationalists' own camp, one distinguished Irishman on these benches had defined devolution as the Latin for Home Rule, and another distinguished Irishman had defined devolution as lunacy from the Nationalist point of view. He would rather not quarrel about words before he knew what they meant.

He could not vote for this Motion; neither did he intend to vote against it, because in the first place he thought Sir Antony MacDonnell stood in no need of defence. Sir Antony MacDonnell was in as proud a position as any man in the empire to-day. In the second place he knew that it was not the fault of the Government alone that the Wyndham-MacDonnell policy broke down in Ireland, and he could not conscientiously be a party to a policy which had driven the hon. Member for Dover from office, and in the third place he believed that Ireland was of higher interest than the cornering of the Tory or the Liberal Party. Ireland would want both Parties. It had been his fate to be denounced as a Whig for helping the Liberals to give them Home Rule, and he had been denounced as a Tory for helping the Tories to abolish landlordism. He dared say that he would be denounced as a Liberal, when, as he hoped, the Liberals began to do good work for Ireland. If they did good work for Ireland it was good enough for him. He was not in the least ashamed to avow that he for one had been true to any obligation of honour he had ever contracted with English Parties. Perhaps he might be allowed to say that, like some of the principal personages in this drama, if he had changed his opinion, if he had seen reason to change his opinion in this world of change and in this House of change, he should not think it in the slightest degree discreditable to avow it. But the fact happened to be that, so far as the situation had changed in this House since he first entered it, twenty-two or twenty-three years ago, it was Parties on both sides of this House who had happily changed, and it was not he nor those who thought with him. In the days when it was necessary to rouse English statesmen to the reality and intensity of Irish dissatisfaction, and to do it by pretty rough methods, he was glad to say that he made his humble contribution towards teaching that lesson. He was not a very old man, but he had seen the hair of five or six generations of Irish secretaries grow grey. It was no consolation that his own hair had grown pretty grey in the operation, but these rough methods were necessary, and without them he and his friends should never have roused the House to the truth. He was as little a peace-at-any-price man now as ever, and if events such as those of Dursey Island the other day, or speeches like some of the threatening speeches of the new Chief Secretary for Ireland should make it necessary, which God forbid, to remind English statesmen again of the facts of Irish life and of the unquenchable spirit of Irish nationality with which they were struggling—well, it was just possible that the Government would not have any reason to complain of any criminal excess of moderation on his part.

He did hope that that stage of conflict was past. He did believe that they had reached a point at which the progress of their cause for the future would depend not so much upon revolutionary strife, not upon any corner intrigues, not even on their strength in the division lobby, important as that undoubtedly was, but would depend, he hoped, upon combining both English Parties upon this question. It would depend upon their patiently conciliating their opponents. It would depend upon American and colonial opinion in their favour. It would depend upon the living example of successful self-government which was being actually given at that moment by their county councils and district councils, and, above all, the irresistible force of events by which Sir West Ridgeway, a Protestant and Tory, had been brought to the same opinion as Sir Antony MacDonnell. He had said before to those who were amazed at their moderation in the Land Conference that, so foolish was the prevalent notion in England about Irish affairs, there never had been a moment, even in the fiercest struggles against coercion government for the last twenty-five years, when they had not been just as ready as at the Land Conference to close with any genuine manifestation of peace. They were ready for it at the time of the Treaty of Kilmainham with the Liberals, and with what was called the Muncaster Alliance with the Tories. They were ready in 1883, and in 1903, when the most magnificent opportunity was not lost, but only adjourned by one of the inscrutable strokes of destiny which had often crushed the hopes of Ireland. He could not claim to speak for anybody but himself. He had not the slightest desire to do so. But he hoped that he might claim, like an eminent personage, that he occupied the position of ploughing a lone furrow, though, unlike him, he had the hearty confidence that he was not ploughing the sands. He had expressed his views, and he claimed to speak for millions of the Irish people when he told the English House of Commons that, if they were wise at this hour, the opportunity for a settlement of Irish grievances was not now lost but only adjourned. It would yet be recognised that this question had got to be settled, not by Party debates and divisions, but by the best men of Ireland and the best men of England and in the Colonies coming together into a peace conference which would bring England what would be worth to her more than all the dreams of Empire—and that was the peace, the honest peace, at home in Ireland.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE (Antrim, N.) said he thought the hon. Members for Ireland who sat below the gangway opposite must feel that they were under a debt of gratitude to the much-despised Gentlemen from the North-East of Ireland who had been the means of inducing the hon. Member for Cork to come over from Ireland to deliver himself of the speech to which they had just listened. It was, however, very unfortunate that when the hon. Member had come so far he had not told the House all that was within his knowledge. He was perfectly satisfied, from reading the correspondence of the hon. Member, that it would go down to posterity, like the letters of Junius, or Swift's letters, that it would be publicly appreciated as "the O'Brien correspondence," which could be had for the sum of twopence. He was satisfied from a perusal of that correspondence that the hon. Member knew a great deal more than any other person of the transactions which had given rise to the whole action of the Unionist Party in Ireland and in England during the last two or three years.

MR. WILLIAM O'BRIEN said he was in the position of the needy knife-grinder who had no story to tell. He knew nothing of the negotiations. If the hon. Member for Waterford knew something of them, at least he knew nothing to the discredit of any one.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE said he should be sorry to think that the hon. Member for Cork knew anything to the discredit of any one. He, however, would like to know what was the reason that there should come such a remarkable change in the public sentiments which from time to time the hon. Gentleman delivered to the people of Ireland and abroad.

He had listened with some interest to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who moved the Resolution. He noticed the old familiar tone; the effort to elicit cheers from those whom he regarded as his allies. He noticed, too, that the right hon. Gentleman spoke of Irish wishes, Irish sentiment, and the Irish people all through his speech, just in the same way as he spoke of the inhabitants of Cape Colony and Natal, always meaning the exclusion of the loyal British residents in any of those countries. That was the only view the right hon. Gentleman seemed able to take. His sympathies in any part of the kingdom could only be enlisted by those who were in opposition to the general feeling and instincts of the Imperial sentiment in their country. When the right hon. Gentleman referred to the Irish people he always meant the Nationalists. Ulster Members were under no illusions whatever as to the right hon. Gentleman. They knew that in England he and such of those who sat behind him as were his followers posed as the champions of religious liberty. They were always protesting against the domination of the National Church. The right hon. Gentleman himself liked to be regarded as a sort of Protestant Defender of the Faith. Yet there was no one in the House more ready to hand over the Unionist Protestants of Ireland, whom he never lost the chance of sneering at, to the most intolerable ecclesiastical tyranny represented by hon. Members opposite. They knew what the policy of the hon. Gentleman would be if he came back to power. He did not know if that policy had been settled in detail, but its outlines had been divulged by one of the most active Members of the Party, the junior Member for Oldham, whose statement at Bradford a few weeks ago had not been disavowed, that it would be the duty and the province of the Liberal Party, when they came into power, to take up the reins so rudely snatched from the hands of Mr. Wyndham and Sir Antony MacDonnell. He took it that that had the assent of the right hon. Gentleman. If that were so they knew his position perfectly well. They had no intention of following him, and if they found themselves in the same lobby as he, it would only be because poverty made strange bed-fellows.

He should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman a Question. The right hon. Gentleman put down early in the session—he did not pretend to give the exact date—a Question which dealt with the subject they had been discussing in almost the same terms as the notice now on the Paper. The right hon. Gentleman then wished to know what further correspondence there was, and he might say it was singular how completely the right hon. Gentleman, in introducing his Motion, had abandoned what he might call the operative part of the Resolution. They heard now nothing of further correspondence, or of insistence on the production of further documents. For some reason or other the right hon. Gentleman completely abandoned that part of his Motion. Earlier in the session the right hon. Gentleman put on the Paper an inquiry as to further correspondence. The right hon. Gentleman, unfortunately, had a temporary indisposition, and during his absence the Question stood over, and finally disappeared from the Paper. Nothing more was heard of the matter, keen as the right hon. Gentleman's anxiety must have been, until April 12th. Now on April 11th the present Chief Secretary for Ireland, in reply to the Member for South Belfast, stated, in a reply which gave great dissatisfaction to hon. Members opposite, that he would see that the Under-Secretary for Ireland was subject to those powers of supervision and control which were reserved to the Chief Secretary, and which, as far as he was concerned, would be used. It was a very satisfactory Answer, it was right to say, to Irish Unionists. The extraordinary thing was that on the following day the right hon. Gentleman, who presumably was dissatisfied, or was in communication with some one who was much dissatisfied with the reply, put down the notice of Motion calling the attention of the House to the matter of further correspondence. He asked whether there was any relation between the reply of the Chief Secretary on the previous day, and the putting of the Motion on the Paper? Were there communications passing?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: None whatever.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE said that in that case it was a remarkable coincidence, but he accepted the right hon. Gentleman's statement. It was well he could make that statement, because the surmise that there had been communications was very general, considering the dates. He might say frankly, and he had the privilege of speaking for some of his colleagues from the North of Ireland, that they were not going to support the right hon. Gentleman, and that they were unfortunately on this occasion, not able to support the Prime Minister. He was not accustomed to beat about the bush, and he would like at once to state the reason. They objected to the policy of the right hon. Gentleman, but unfortunately in Ireland Unionists had a very strong feeling of suspicion that their own Unionist Government had been emulating or trying to emulate the right hon. Gentleman. When it became necessary to make a change in the *personnel* of the Irish Executive they felt that both the Chief Secretary, who called the Under-Secretary his colleague, and the Under-Secretary, who called the Chief Secretary his colleague, should be removed from working in opposition to Unionism in Ireland, and until this was done they could not support the Government. If the Under-Secretary was to maintain under a Unionist Government his position as a permanent official in Ireland and the head of the permanent officials in Ireland it made very little difference to Irish Unionists whether the administration was carried on by a Unionist Government or under the ægis of the Leader of the Opposition. It was true that they had been sneered at by the Leader of the Opposition and they were a small Party in the House. He was glad to be able to think, however, that they were at least a united Party. They had the knowledge that not only were they resolute to press these feelings to the logical end, but that they had behind them the whole of those whom they represented in this matter. They had voted Unionist and they must have beyond all doubt a Unionist Government set above suspicion. The Union meant a great deal more to them than to hon. Gentlemen opposite and if the maintenance of it was to be subject-matter for the dissecting table it did not matter whether the knife was a Home-Rule knife or otherwise. The Union meant much more to them than it did to hon. Gentlemen in England, who were apt to consider it as a Party election cry.

Before he dealt with the matter which he wished to bring before the House he should like to clear away some statements that had been circulated. He did not mind anything the Leader of the Opposition said about them, but in the Unionist Press it had been ascribed to them that they had persecuted and attacked Sir Antony Macdonnell because he was a Roman Catholic. He had heard the hon. Member for Cork repeat that calumny just now. What were the facts? Sir Antony Macdonnell came to Ireland in October, 1902. He served through the whole of 1903, and it was not until January 23rd, 1904, at Lord Londonderry's meeting in Belfast, that a single Irish Unionist ever said a word against him. Even then his name was not mentioned. His name was first mentioned on the Easter Monday at Orange meetings in the North of Ireland in 1904, because the scandal—in which he was personally and directly implicated—of Constable Anderson was public property. But such was the alleged intolerance and bigotry of Irish Unionists that though Sir Antony MacDonnell was a Roman Catholic he was eighteen months in the country before his name was mentioned on a platform. For the first eighteen months no attack in any shape or form was made by Irish Unionists against him. Another matter was,—and this would dispose of another myth put in circulation—and he had heard it stated even by some of his friends, that Sir Antony Macdonnell had not been six months in Ireland before he found that the place did not suit him, that he was put to too much trouble, that his Indian experience did not stand him in good stead, and that he would have there and then resigned if it had not been for the attack by the Member for North Armagh. He (Mr. Moore) had disposed of that when he reminded the House that Sir Antony was eighteen months in the country before any criticism was directed against him. For his own part he had put himself to great inconvenience from time to time by voting for Roman Catholics who stood at elections. He had voted for Mr. Justice Kerry over and over again and would do the same to-morrow. He must dissent from the proposition that because a man was a Roman Catholic any Protestant in Ireland was to get up and attack him. He had never done it nor would any of his colleagues do it.

The next charge against them was that they were attempting to limit the Government in their choice of a permanent official. He thought that was a little bit too thin. It was not a question of Sir Antony MacDonnell's appointment. It was a question whether, now that it had become necessary to make a change in the *personnel* of the Government of Ireland, Sir Antony MacDonnell should be there retained. If he were an ordinary Civil servant he quite agreed that no political Party in the House would have any right to attack him, but they did not consider, and the House did not consider, that he was an ordinary Civil servant. They were going upon his open political record during the last two years, and they said whatever his ability or merits might be his loyalty to his own supporters had not been questioned. They said his political open record in Ireland for the last two years unfitted him for the post of the head of the permanent staff in Ireland. It was not a case of interfering with the choice of a permanent official. The question simply was, had he or had he not, by his action, deprived himself of the protection a Civil servant had always received on the Unionist side of the House? He (Mr. Moore) assented to the proposition of Lord Lansdowne in another place on 17th February that as a matter of principle, and he was accepting the dictum of the English Solicitor-General, it was wrong for Civil servants to concern themselves in political movements. When Sir Antony MacDonnell went to Ireland the one thing he insisted upon was that he was to have a finger in the political pie, and the Leader of the Opposition said none on the Unionist side made any objection to his conference with Lord Dunraven on the Land Bill, or any objection to the various matters in the last two years. But the Leader of the Opposition must know that their grievance was that no Irish Unionist knew the terms or powers under which Sir Antony MacDonnell was appointed until they were read to the House. They did not know he had special political powers. It was hardly right that they should be accused or censured by the Leader of the Opposition for not taking note of these things before.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I did not censure anybody. I merely pointed out the facts.

Mr. WILLIAM MOORE said then he might take it as approval on the part of the right hon. Gentleman. But he supposed it would be wrong in three different ways that an ordinary Civil servant should so take part in political movements. First, it would be wrong as between himself and his chief, but in this case he was to have these powers. It was also wrong for a Minister to have these powers unknown to the House in a position in which he could not be answerable to the House. Thirdly, it was distinctly wrong to his subordinates. Dealing with the history of the case, the fact remained that from the moment Sir Antony MacDonnell arrived a perfect maze of intrigue seemed to have set itself on foot. Not so long before the Member for Cork had been preaching in the country his views that if they only had arms he would rather commend the opportunity of making the Shannon run red as the Tugela. This melodramatic action of the hon. Gentleman suddenly vanished and the Government became perfect. Sir Antony MacDonnell was perfection, and he supposed no one on the Unionist Benches had bestowed on the Under-Secretary so much unnecessary laudation as the hon. Member for Cork had. The hon. Gentleman liked being a little extreme. They all had their weaknesses. He did not know whether the hon. Gentleman wrote to Sir Antony MacDonnell offering to black his boots. The fact remained that after being an open opponent of Sir Antony MacDonnell the hon. Gentleman became his warmest champion. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Waterford delivered a remarkable speech at Liverpool on the 19th March in which he said that two years ago the Land Bill was introduced and that he well remembered the intense anxiety and fervent hopes entertained by the community which he then addressed. They were told at that time that the land question was about to be settled at one stroke, and upon the lines laid down by Parnell and the Land League. The promise held out went further than that, because they were told, and rightly told, that the land question was almost the only remaining great obstacle in the way of Home Rule, and they were told that the Land Act would be followed by a measure of self-government, not perhaps the full measure of Home Rule that was demanded, but such a measure of national self-government as to go a long distance towards the settlement of the Irish national question, and that such a measure would be passed by the universal consent of all political Parties in England. He should like, in the interests of the Unionist Party, to know by whom that promise was made to the Member for Waterford.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): If the hon. and learned Member implies that a promise of that kind was made to me by the late Chief Secretary or any responsible member of the Government that is not so.

Mr. WILLIAM MOORE: I ask him to say by whom it was made.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND said they were told it by the public opinion of this country. It was the current opinion. They were told it in the newspapers, and the trend of all the speeches in different parts of the country went in the same direction.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE accepted the statement in a common impersonal sense. But, impersonal or not, that was the principle advocated by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cork through the country, and Irish Unionists never regarded the hon. Gentleman as dangerous in this matter until he became moderate. It only showed that the hon. Member for Cork had really all the winning cards in his hands, but because it was not a cry that would appeal to popular clamour, his colleagues, who thought more of political and financial support, threw him over, and he had been saving up his wisdom ever since in a sort of comparative exile. But the hon. Gentleman really came out with the winning cards in his hands, and he (Mr. Moore) marvelled at the crass fatuity of his colleagues who sat beside him in not seeing it. If the Member for Waterford in referring to these public speeches and policies throughout the country was referring to the counter programme that was held out by the Member for Cork it was fairly satisfactory evidence of the new policy which was set up in Ireland of conciliating everyone at the expense of Unionists. The hon. Member for Cork and others were not the only people who were conciliated by promises in this way. He had read the very bitter complaints on the part of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Limerick that he had been tricked by promises made with regard to Roman Catholic education at this time. The fact was that promises were on top at this time. Everybody got a promise who wanted it, and it was therefore quite possible when everyone was in a state of contented blessedness to arrange a Land Conference and get the Land Bill through. The Ulster farmers were just as much interested in the Land Conference as anybody else, and no exception was taken to it. The instrument selected was Captain Shaw Taylor, who had distinguished himself in Galway by bringing about a conference for granting additional licences in Galway. The Bishop there was a great friend of Sir Antony MacDonnell, and it was through him that Captain Shaw Taylor was introduced to Sir Antony, so that the Under-Secretary might have the credit of bringing about the Land Conference. The point was that the very men who met to settle the land question were the very men who put their names to the scheme of devolution which was initiated eighteen months later. Looking back at the matter now, he was convinced that the Attorney-General was perfectly right when he said at Derry that this was part of one transaction; that the persons who were brought together for the Land Conference were brought together by the Under-Secretary for the purpose of this scheme of devolution.

MR. WILLIAM O'BRIEN said the hon. Gentleman was in error in saying that any one connected with the Land Conference signed the declaration of devolution.

MR. T. HARRINGTON (Dublin Harbour) said the hon. and learned Gentleman was using the term "Land Conference" in two senses. The Land Conference was a conference between the representatives of the landlords and the tenants, the "Land Conference Committee" was a committee of the landlords.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE said they all knew who the signatories of the declaration were, but his point was that these people were brought together ostensibly in the first instance for the purposes of the Land Conference, and he could only repeat in the words of the Attorney-General that it was all part of the same transaction. It was "a deal" all round. He did not know who was responsible for this, but whoever was responsible there were other matters in which the Under-Secretary was directly and personally implicated; instances of political interference and transactions which showed a bias in his mind which rendered him unfit to discharge his duty impartially as a Civil servant and as Under-Secretary. In the first place, there was his attitude on the question of the Roman Catholic University, and, in the next place, there was the Anderson case, in which the Under-Secretary, at the instance of the Rev. Mr. O'Hara, a Roman Catholic priest, drove from the Royal Irish Constabulary a young constable whose only crime was that being a Protestant he wanted to marry a Roman Catholic lady.

Mr. WYNDHAM (Dover): When I I dealt with that question in this House I not only contradicted that view but conclusively proved that it could no longer be entertained.

Mr. WILLIAM MOORE said he adhered to that view, in spite of what the Member for Dover said. The question was determined by Question and Answer in the House, and the Member for Dover then stated that on the identical evidence on which he had reinstated this man the Under-Secretary had dismissed him.

Mr. WYNDHAM: I hope the House will allow me to assert, with the facts clear in my mind, that there is no basis for that charge. This constable was removed by the proper authorities in the force to which he belonged, in pursuance of the views and policy of the Inspector-General. If the matter had come before me as a matter of routine I should have initialed it. I was responsible, because I was responsible to the Inspector-General. Sir Antony MacDonnell was not responsible either technically or in any other way.

Mr. WILLIAM MOORE said he would be sorry to contradict any statement made in that House, but he knew that after the constable was dismissed, and he knew it because the right hon. Member for Dover said it, he sent to the officer in Dublin a certificate relating to the young lady, and that certificate was laid before the Inspector-General, and that after it had lain on his table for three weeks the Inspector-General wrote a letter confirming the constable's dismissal and saying he saw no reason to interfere. He called that dismissing a man on the same evidence, because there was not another particle of evidence on which the right hon. Gentleman reinstated him.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The hon. and learned Member must accept my statement. That letter was a letter of the Inspector-General embodying his views of what the discipline of the force required. It was not for Sir Antony MacDonnell to take another line; he did not take another line; and I only took another line when that document was submitted to legal interpretation, and I was led to see that I had an argument which would prevail on the Inspector-General to modify the view he had previously held.

Mr. WILLIAM MOORE said he did not think there was any issue on the facts, whatever inference might be drawn. ["Yes, there is."] Very well, then; he would stick to his own.

*Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER was understood to call on the hon. and learned Member to withdraw his statement.

Mr. WILLIAM MOORE: I say it is a matter of recollection. Is not my memory as good as that of the right hon. Gentleman.

*Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover says he did not say what the hon. Gentleman says he did; therefore he must withdraw.

Mr. WILLIAM MOORE said he should be sorry to put any words into the right hon. Gentleman's mouth which he had not used. The identical evidence on which, for any reason at all—he was not imputing reasons—the right hon. Gentleman reinstated the constable was before the Under-Secretary when he was shown the draft letter of the Inspector-General dismissing the man and approved of it.

Mr. WYNDHAM: That does not controvert what I have said.

Mr. WILLIAM MOORE said he had never said anything else. The House was well able to judge the share of the Under-Secretary in that transaction from the debate of August last. Then there was the Ballinasloe case, the appointment of a constable at Roundstone, and lastly this devolution business, which was only the culmination of a long series of events showing the political bias and favouritism of the Under-Secretary. When the Under-Secretary went to Castlebar one would really have thought he was the Governor of a province in

India. He received an address thanking him for his political services and applauding him for having checked "the bigots," by which term was meant all who disagreed with him, the noble Lord in the Cabinet, and the Ulster representatives. All this was tolerated as part of the duties of an impartial and judicial Civil servant. He understood the Chief Secretary had promised to reconsider the matter of handing over to the Roman Catholic Bishop the sole control of the lunatics in an asylum at Youghal. ["There is not a word of truth in it."] In view of these facts was it any wonder that Irish Unionists were not satisfied to support the Government while the Under-Secretary remained in his position? Sir Antony MacDonnell obviously intended to stay where he was, and to submit to anything in order to retain office. He had submitted to having his conduct styled as indefensible, and to being told that the Chief Secretary intended to exercise his powers of supervision and control. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover loyally and properly retired when he found he could be of no further use, but such considerations did not influence the Under-Secretary. Of what use could a permanent Under-Secretary be in Ireland when one-third of the people distrusted him? Why did the Government keep him there? Sir Antony MacDonnell had been compared to Thomas Drummond, Thomas Drummond was persecuted by an oligarchy; but in the North of Ireland it was the middle class, the democracy, who were more anxious than anybody else that Sir Antony MacDonnell should be removed. He would say nothing about the victims of the boycotting, disorder, and intimidation which under the rule of the Under-Secretary had sprung up in the South and West of Ireland. The appointment was said to be merely temporary. He did not suggest that the Prime Minister was seeking to evade the point, but he did say that if, after all the assurances that had been given, Sir Antony MacDonnell was kept in Ireland as a permanent official, those assurances were little short of evasions.

It was said that one reason for Sir Antony MacDonnell's retention was the fear of the Government that he might make further disclosures. He did not know whether that were true, but the feeling in Ireland was that the bottom of the mystery had not yet been reached. There was more to come out, and to whose credit it would be when it was out, he did not know; but if there were more disclosures, it would be better to get the whole thing out and done with it. The disclosures might be bad, but the inferences which would be drawn from the retention of a Home-Rule colleague would be still worse for the Unionist Party. Ninety-nine men out a hundred on the Government side of the House were of opinion that Sir Antony MacDonnell ought never to have been appointed; what justification, then, was there for retaining him? He was a source of suspicion in Ireland and of weakness in England. Some explanation ought to be forthcoming. The position could not be better summarised than it was in a leading article in *The Times* to the following effect—

> "Still more serious, perhaps, must be the effect of the presence of a doubtful, if not a hostile, element on the spirit and temper of the Civil Service, especially the resident magistrates and police officers, who have been accustomed to look up to the Under-Secretary, in the frequent and unavoidable absences of his chief and often at other times, 'as the *de facto* ruler of Ireland.'"

So long as the Under-Secretary, with his political past, remained in office so long would those officials feel that there was an enemy at the gate, and it would be difficult for them to act with the same freedom as they otherwise would. Irish Unionists had no complaint to make of the present Chief Secretary, who had had to face a very troublesome matter. Their complaint was against the Govecnment. They had never asked for the dismissal of Sir Antony MacDonnell, but for his transfer, and for some reason that had become, not a Departmental, but a Cabinet matter. Irish Unionists would exercise all the pressure they could to compass their end. It was said the other day that their grievances were either antiquarian or prophetic. This grievance was neither. It was a pressing, insistent grievance, and he hoped that when the Prime Minister came to consider the unfortunate circumstances which had compelled him to make his choice between this official, with his political past, and his Irish Unionist friends and colleagues, with their record, he would take the only logical and proper course, thereby enabling Ulster Members to vote, as they would gladly do, confidence in His Majesty's Government.

MR. ROBSON (South Shields) wished the Prime Minister had been present during the speech of the hon. and learned Member, in order that he might have contrasted the statesman he had lost with the Party leader to whom he had succumbed. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover had had a very distinguished tenure of office, and had written his name for good in the history of both England and Ireland, but the great ability he had shown during his tenure of office had been almost surpassed by the chivalrous generosity with which he had spoken of the reasons which led to his retirement. If one were disposed to find fault with the right hon. Gentleman it would be that he had taken almost too great a measure of blame upon himself, and had increased the doubt and obscurity surrounding this debate. The hon. Member for North Antrim had stated that the question was whether or not Sir Antony MacDonnell should be retained. That was not the question on the Paper.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE: I did not say that was the question before the House, but I said that was the question which affected my colleagues and myself.

MR. ROBSON said obviously that was the question upon which the hon. Member had addressed the House. The hon. Member had made charges against the Government of evasiveness and want of straightforwardness, and those were far more important than the charges levelled against Sir Antony MacDonnell. The real question was not whether or not the Under-Secretary should be maintained, but whether the censure passed upon him by the Government should not now be removed. One listened in wonder and astonishment throughout this debate at the complete absence of anything like an attempt on the part of the hon. and learned Member opposite to prove indefensible conduct on the part of Sir Antony MacDonnell, having regard to the terms of his appointment and the confidence reposed in him by his chief.

How did the position stand with regard to Sir Antony MacDonnell? It had been admitted and affirmed by the Government that Sir Antony MacDonnell acted in perfect loyalty and in the belief that he was acting within the terms of his appointment. Was he justified in that belief? That was the real question they had to decide. They knew that in acting as he did with regard to the devolution question he was, in fact, only repeating the procedure adopted in regard to the land question. There was no substantial difference so far as the procedure was concerned between his attitude in both cases. In the case of the land question he was authorised to communicate with the different Parties in Ireland and to formulate a scheme to be laid before the public for consideration; that was what he did with regard to the land question, and that was what he had done with regard to devolution. That was not a question to be decided by construing the terms of his appointment: The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover told them, without attempting to attack Sir Antony MacDonnell, that the question of the government of Ireland was considered between himself and Sir Antony in many conversations. It appeared that Sir Antony referred to various Indian precedents which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover did not appear to fully appreciate and understand. The right hon. Gentleman said it was due, perhaps, to his colossal ignorance of Indian affairs that he failed to appreciate the all-important fact that when Indian precedents were cited, Sir Antony MacDonnell was citing precedents which involved some measure and degree of the elective principle. He was not astonished that the right hon. Gentleman had failed to appreciate that fact, but was there any fault to be found with Sir Antony MacDonnell on that account? The late Chief Secretary might have asked him about those Indian precedents, and he might have inquired how the members of those boards in India came to be members. He might have asked whether they were nominated or elected by public bodies. He might have asked those questions if he thought that he did not understand

and appreciate the full significance of Sir Antony MacDonnell's proposals, and therefore there was no blame attaching to Sir Antony up to that stage.

What was the next important point? The next all-important point was that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover took a well-earned holiday which nobody grudged him, and he said that in doing so he neglected the House of Commons, and took his mind off politics. That was a very meritorious thing to do, but, unfortunately, Ireland took no holiday and never took its mind off politics, and in the absence of the right hon. Gentleman the Irish Reform Association came into being. One could not help suspecting that the right hon. Gentleman was not wholly unacquainted with the gestation of that body. He had told them that Sir Antony MacDonnell was in personal communication with those who were bringing that association into being. He had told them that he could not and did not object to the Under-Secretary for Ireland being in communication with Lord Dunraven upon the question of Irish government which was involved. What was there wrong in Sir Antony MacDonnell's action? He was left alone with the Lord-Lieutenant. Who took the place of the Chief Secretary whilst he was away from Ireland? Perhaps the Prime Minister could tell them that. In the absence of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover, who was governing Ireland? If it was not the Lord-Lieutenant, who was it? Of course it was the Lord-Lieutenant. It would be a somewhat novel practice if the Lord-Lieutenant was not looked upon as the active and practical head of Government in Ireland. If the Lord-Lieutenant had no authority over Sir Antony MacDonnell, he should like to know if Sir Antony was told that. Was he told that during the Chief Secretary's absence the Government of Ireland was in a state of suspense and that nobody must do anything? Certainly not. Sir Antony MacDonnell was left alone with the Lord-Lieutenant, and from that moment everything he did was amply covered by the Lord-Lieutenant. He was pursuing the same line of conduct as he pursued in regard to [the land question. He entered into communication with Lord Dunraven with the Chief Secretary's knowledge and consent, and he was formulating those reports with the Lord-Lieutenant's knowledge and consent; and it was little less than an outrage to subject him to that censure which was passed upon him by the Cabinet. He hoped hon. Gentlemen would consider it their duty, apart from any Party allegiance, to defend Civil servants from unmerited censure like this. The Government did not believe that Sir Antony MacDonnell had done anything indefensible, for if they had believed it he would have gone before this, and he would have gone before the Chief Secretary. The speech they had heard from the hon. Member for North Antrim betrayed the real spirit which had brought about the resignation of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover, and the same spirit would certainly have been powerful enough to secure the dismissal of the Under-Secretary for Ireland if there had been any cause for it. He thought they ought to hear what the Lord-Lieutenant had to say about this matter, and he should like the correspondence with the Lord-Lieutenant included in the demand which had been put forward. Had the Lord-Lieutenant apologised or protested? He thought it would be found that, so far from apologising, he had protested, and certainly he had affirmed his opinion upon this matter like a man.

He wished to refer to another aspect of the question which had been referred to by the Leader of the Opposition in his speech. His right hon. friend had asked the House to consider the state of things in 1902, when Sir Antony MacDonnell was appointed. That was a most significant branch of this inquiry, because in 1902 affairs between England and Ireland were in a critical and interesting state, and in that year the policy of killing Home Rule by kindness had come to an end. Nevertheless Home Rule was still alive and its would-be murderer had passed from the scene. The Unionist Party were then breathing fire and fury against Home Rule, and they were placated with promises of coercion for Ireland, which was the only thing that ever satisfied them.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): On a point of order I submit that that is a most improper imputation to make against hon. Members of this House. To say that the only thing that ever pleases them is to see their own fellow-countrymen coerced is, in my opinion, a most improper observation to make.

*Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I think the hon. Member made it as a general remark, and did not apply it personally against any hon. Member of this House.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG, (who was greeted with Nationalist cries of "Name,") said the hon. Member made a statement in regard to himself and his colleagues on the Unionist Benches, and he considered that was making a personal attack.

Mr. ROBSON, proceeding, said that seemed to him to be quite a novel point of order. The hon. Member opposite might deny his accusation with regard to coercion, but he could not alter the history of his own country and the history of his Party. Who had coercion satisfied if it had not satisfied hon. Members opposite? Who had demanded coercion except the Party opposite, and what other remedy had they ever demanded except coercion? In the year 1902 coercion was being applied to please them. In that year the Prime Minister did not believe in the efficiency of the policy of coercion. The Prime Minister knew coercion well, for he had tried it for a long time and under more favourable circumstances than were ever likely to be given to any Chief Secretary in the future, and the right hon. Gentleman had seen it end in a disastrous failure, and it brought about no better result than the Plan of Campaign. The Prime Minister knew in 1902 that coercion was not a permanent and effective policy in Ireland. It was not only not a remedy but it was not even a policy. The right hon. Gentleman did not give the people of England in 1902 the benefit of his experience and knowledge; he chose another plan. He chose the plan of flaunting coercion before the country in order to placate those Gentlemen who were in favour of it; but, while doing so, he in secret abandoned the policy of coercion. He sat down in secret to hand over the administrative powers to a permanent official, who detested and denounced coercion root and branch, and who told him so; he sat down to arrange for the wholesale expropriation of the English landlord garrison in Ireland, and he arranged with Sir Antony MacDonnell that there should be a new policy of administrative conciliation. No wonder the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for North Antrim accused his Party leaders of not being straightforward.

But it was not merely that the right hon. Gentleman was laying down a new policy both in respect of land and administrative conciliation. He knew perfectly well that it was idle to talk of administrative conciliation in Ireland so long as there was in that country a fixed, fundamental, and irreconcilable hostility between the local and the central bodies concerned in the Government. That want of accord between the local and the central bodies in Ireland was the crux of the whole Irish political administration. It had become intensified since 1897, when the Local Government Act was passed, and now no statesman could refuse to face it. They might talk about coercion or conciliation, but, whether Tory or Liberal, Governments in this country had got to face and to solve the problem how to bring the local governing bodies in Ireland into some kind of accord with the central body in Ireland, and the Prime Minister knew that. When the terms of Sir Antony MacDonnell's appointment were laid before him, and when he saw the list of articles on which Sir Antony insisted, when he saw the reference to co-ordination or correlation, involving the direction and control of the whole administrative machinery of Irish government, what did the right hon. Gentleman suppose that to mean? When he assented to the policy he knew perfectly well that he was making a surrender on the question of Irish administration just as marked as the surrender which he had already made in regard to Irish land. Did the right hon. Gentleman ever inquire what co-ordination meant? He told them the other night that it meant the bringing of these bodies somewhat more under the direct control of the Chief Secretary. Well, they had just heard from Mr. Deputy-Speaker that they must always accept what any Member said in that House, and the rules of order compelled them to accept the statement of the Prime Minister. But what was the position of the Prime Minister? He knew that he had given up the English garrison so far as it consisted of landlords; he knew that he had abandoned coercion, and he knew, therefore, that he must look for the maintenance of law and order to non-coercive means. Were they to suppose that the right hon. Gentleman was going to give up all those instruments of English ascendancy and yet do nothing to bring about that accord between the essential governing bodies of Ireland? He must have known that if he did nothing he was deliberately weakening his own force, and deliberately strengthening the force of his opponents at its most vital point.

The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think at that time that if the country only had a statement about coercion that would be sufficient to satisfy those to whom he looked for political support, but let the House consider what followed. After the appointment of Sir Antony MacDonnell there was an interval of two years before the events which were now the subject-matter of discussion arose. Did the Prime Minister during the whole of the period between 1902 and 1904 never trouble to inquire of his Chief Secretary how co-ordination was getting on? The right hon. Gentleman said he did not know what co-ordination was when it was first mentioned. Did he allow two years to elapse without ever asking the question, or did he think that co-ordination was one of those words he would define in due time, according to his own interpretation, as he had done in the case of "retaliation?" He was prepared to believe it, if told, but it appeared to be incredible that neither he nor the Chief Secretary should have devoted five minutes conversation to this most important subject. Let it be remembered that in 1903 the Land Act was passed, and from August, 1903, to August, 1904, Irish devolution — the administrative problem—took the place in public interest of the land question, and, therefore, it was impossible to suppose that the Prime Minister and his Chief Secretary should never have discussed what the policy of the Unionist Party was to be in relation to this vital subject. If they never discussed this matter during that period it showed what interest these distinguished persons took in the unity of the Empire, of which they claimed to be the only possible guardians. The fact was that the Prime Minister did not ask the meaning of co-ordination from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover because he knew what it meant. He might not trouble about details, but he knew substantially that co-ordination in Ireland involved the control of the whole administrative machinery of government, and that it meant in one way or other a distinct and an irrevocable step towards placing the control of Irish local government in local hands. That was what it did mean, and that was what it would continue to mean. From the position which the Prime Minister had thus taken up no English Party in the future could recede. Whether the Liberals were able to carry out their promises in regard to Ireland or not, it was certain that there was no possible Government for Ireland in the future unless it adopted what was known as the MacDonnell policy, and adopted it in its widest sense.

Why did the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for North Antrim complain of the want of straightforwardness on the part of the Government? What right had he, or the Party to which he belonged, to expect greater straightforwardness from this Ministry than the free-trade Unionists? It was a most unreasonable demand. But it might be asked why the hon. and learned Gentleman complained of this subterranean policy on the part of the Government. It made, undoubtedly, for the doctrines which Liberals preached. Liberals did not complain of those arrangements and agreements which they had seen with regard to Sir Antony MacDonnell. So far from complaining, they said they were good, statesmanlike, and sensible; but they wanted to know why they were done by stealth. Why should this policy of sensible, statesmanlike, and practical government be carried on in secret while the Prime Minister openly and avowedly professed that his policy was one of coercion, because, at the time the Government were doing these things through Sir Antony MacDonnell, they were throwing dust in the eyes of the English people? By far the most useful moral they could draw from this debate was that the Prime Minister knew perfectly well that there was a strong Unionist and anti-Irish feeling in England, and, while he deplored its existence, he felt that he could not afford to part with it in the management of the Unionist Party. Let that be remembered by the English people. It might discount some of the platform rhetoric which would be heard from Members on the other side of the House as to Liberals being the allies of Irishmen. The hon. and learned Member for North Antrim had complained that his Party had been betrayed. Let him look out, for they were going to be betrayed again. If the Unionists were returned to power they would have to take up again the policy of administrative conciliation; and it could only be taken up by giving Ireland a greater measure of self-government. If the time had come when the reform of Irish government must be considered in principle and detail, do not let it be done by secret arrangements. Let the House of Commons and the country know it, and let the nation take its part in the discussion of the subject. He thought they might trust something to the wisdom and generosity of the people.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG said that a most unfortunate expression had fallen from the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down. It was a mistake that Members who came from the North of Ireland were desirous to see coercive methods necessary for Ireland. But with the law disregarded in districts as it was at the present day, a Government which claimed for itself the name of Government should see that the law of the country was carried out. That was a very different matter from saying that the Members from the North-East of Ireland were pleased to see coercion in force. If the hon. Member knew anything of the state of things which existed in the West of Ireland at the time the right hon. Member for Dover went over to Galway and the rest of the West of Ireland, and examined the present state of things, he would come back with very different ideas of coercion. Hon. Gentlemen talked indiscriminately about Ireland, and not one in ten of them knew what they were talking about. [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: What about bad whiskey?] He thought that this debate had been remarkable for the fact that very few speakers had dealt with the subject which was before the House, viz., the position of Sir Antony MacDonnell. It was on that point he desired to speak in defence of the position they had taken up in Ulster.

In the month of February, when the revelations of the attitude of the various Unionists towards Sir Antony MacDonnell became public, the whole aspect of the case was altered. Sir Antony MacDonnell was Under-Secretary for Ireland on the same terms and conditions as any other Under-Secretary—as they understood. It had been attempted to be shown that day that an Under-Secretary for Ireland was not an ordinary Under-Secretary; that no Under-Secretary who had ever preceded him had had anything like the powers given to Sir Antony MacDonnell. He maintained that the powers given to Sir Antony MacDonnell were absolutely unconstitutional, and more than were given to any previous Under-Secretary—even to Thomas Drummond. What he complained of was that these powers should have been given to any man, and that the fact that they had been given to him should have been kept secret not only from them in the North of Ireland, but from every Unionist Member in the House. He agreed with the hon. Member opposite that that was the gravamen of the whole business. Where the Government had erred was in that first of all they gave these powers. He submitted that they erred quite as much in that they allowed them for nearly three years to believe that this official was an ordinary official, whereas in reality he was an official with equal powers to the Chief Secretary.

He could understand the hon. Member attacking the Members for Ulster for the position they had taken up; but the hon. Gentleman must remember that he and his friends were

Home Rulers and that they were Unionists, and the most determined Unionists in the House. The whole question of the Union was centred in the constituencies which they represented; and it was useless for hon. Gentlemen opposite to say that they were Unionists to-day. They were Unionists who would remain so, and while they were Unionists they would object most strongly to be called "bigots." There was nothing bigoted about their attitude. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition made use of the old term "the Ascendancy Party." Would anybody explain to him what particular ascendancy they had ever had. In this House they were a small Party, and were made the constant butt for attacks for the amusement of the House by hon. Members on the Nationalist Benches, and of a fair share of amusement on the part of hon. Members sitting on the Liberal Benches opposite. He submitted that in this Sir Antony MacDonnell affair the course taken by the Ulster Members had been the only straightforward and consistent procedure of any section of the House. The proof that their action had been right was that hon. Members on the Nationalist Benches had in the last year ranged themselves on the side of the Government solidly; and if further proof were needed that Sir Antony MacDonnell was a partisan it was that from the first day the name of Sir Antony MacDonnell was mentioned in the House Gentlemen of Home-Rule proclivities defended him. All that was self-evident from the original letter which, after considerable difficulty, had been extracted from the right hon. Member for Dover, which had been written to him by Sir Antony MacDonnell. It was a very frank and straightforward letter. If that letter had been communicated to the Ulster Members three years ago it would have prevented much being said in the House that had been said. In that letter Sir Antony MacDonnell wrote as follows—

> "I have been anxiously thinking over the difficulty. I am an Irishman, a Roman Catholic, and a Liberal in politics. I have strong Irish sympathies. I do not see eye to eye with you in all matters, but from the exposition you were good enough to give me of your views, and from the estimate I formed of your aims and objects, I find that there is a substantial measure of agreement between us."

[NATIONALIST cries of "Go on."] No more quotation was necessary for his purpose. He wanted to prove that Sir Antony MacDonnell was of the same opinion as hon. Members opposite. The whole point of this whole business was, "Had the Government any right to appoint any such official when they knew his political opinions?" The proof of that being the fundamental point was that when the Government appointed Sir Antony MacDonnell they knew his political opinions, and were careful to hide from the Ulster Unionists, from the House, and the country the fact of the special powers that they had given him. Sir Antony MacDonnell had been perfectly frank and straightforward, and from a personal point of view they had no objection to him; but they objected to him because of the fact that he had a different way of thinking from them. [NATIONALIST cries of "He is a Catholic."] Well, of course, that added considerably to their objection to him. Sir Antony MacDonnell's opinions were diametrically opposite to their own, and he had been allowed to use them, and they had a right to fight against him. If it was originally indefensible on the part of the Government to appoint Sir Antony MacDonnell, it was surely equally indefensible to keep him in his position when one-third of the people of Ireland looked upon him with extreme distrust. Furthermore, it must be perfectly clear to the Government that a country could not be ruled properly when a third of the population, and that not the least important third, were thoroughly distrustful in this matter. Therefore, if he could put more pressure on the Government to transfer Sir Antony MacDonnell to some other position, where his abilities could be used for the good of the country, he would willingly do so.

He hoped at that moment it would be seen that the only members of the Government on the Front Bench—the Attorney-General and the Solicitor-General for England—had done more to bring this matter to a head than any Member for Ulster; and the right hon. Gentleman lately appointed

Chief Secretary whose recent action in Ireland they had applauded in every way. They saw in him a Chief Secretary of the type they wanted in Ireland. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman on the Front Bench would convey to the Prime Minister the strong feeling that existed among Ulster Unionists in the House and also in the North of Ireland, for in this matter—although they had been taunted with being a small body—they had behind them one and a quarter million people in the North of Ireland. They felt as strongly as they did a year ago that the retention of Sir Antony MacDonnell in Ireland would only be productive of mischief, and if the Government wished to restore true Unionist opinion in the North of Ireland, confidence in the Prime Minister and in the Government, they could help to bring about that result by sending Sir Antony MacDonnell to some other post.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN (Kilkenny, N.) said the last speaker had advanced the opinion that Sir Antony MacDonnell should be expelled from his present position because the majority of Irish Members had supported him and the minority were against him. In his speech the Member for South Shields failed to grasp one important point. He said that hon. Gentlemen opposite were guided entirely in their conduct in that House and in their discussion of Irish questions outside by one desire, and that was to secure coercion for their countrymen in Ireland. That was only half the truth. There was another reason which inspired hon. Gentlemen opposite. He thought it was stated fairly well by the hon. Member for North Antrim when he said this was a Government pre-eminently of promises. It should have been a Government of places as well as of promises, because everyone knew that in the whole record of the conduct of Irish administration for twenty-five years there never was a Member of the loyal minority in this House who could not be bought by a place, with the exception of the hon. Member for South Belfast, and that he had no doubt would be considered in due course when he was brought into the loyal conventicle in the North of Ireland from which he had been expelled.

The hon. Gentleman who had just sat down invited the Member for South Shields to go to Galway and witness the lawlessness there. Had the hon. Gentleman never heard of lawlessness in Belfast? Only the other day at Portadown there was a magnificent example of law and order, undefended Catholics having been attacked and one assassinated by one of the constituents of the supporters of the glorious cause of law and order. Then they came to this House and for the edification of British journals they held up Ireland as a lawless country, when as a matter of fact there was not in all the world now a more crimeless land than Ireland. Was it a fact that one of the colleagues of the hon. Gentleman opposite had been expelled from one of the legitimate Orange organisations and had had to found a new one?

MR. WILLIAM MOORE: Whoever states that is telling an absolute lie.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN: "An absolute lie" is not a very polite expression.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE: Of course I did not understand that the hon. Gentleman made the statement himself, but that he was basing his remark upon something he had heard.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN: All I care is that the Conservative Association of Belfast——

MR. WILLIAM MOORE: I am not a member of it.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN: The Conservative Association which the hon. Gentleman reprobates——

MR. WILLIAM MOORE: I do not reprobate it. I am not a member of the Belfast Conservative Association. I have nothing to connect me with Belfast. If I lived there I should have, but the hon. Gentleman has no right to say I either approbate or reprobate it.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN said he did not suppose that the Conservative Association was anything like the House of

Commons. Its approbation or reprobation did not count for very much, but his point was that the Conservative Association—and surely it was a central organisation which the hon. Gentleman opposite ought to be a member of if he was to guide the fortunes of a little minority in this House—was at the present time engaged in opposition to the Member for South Belfast. Why did not the Government now settle the Irish question? Nothing was left in the way now but two candidates for knighthoods and three candidates for County Court Judgeships. Give them the knighthoods and County Court Judgeships and they would get rid of the Irish question. In view of what had been paid for power and peace in other parts of the world, it was extraordinary that the Government should not create that unity in the Ulster Tory Party of which so much had been heard. The hon. Member for North Antrim did not attack Sir Antony MacDonnell nor the Chief Secretary for two years. Why was that? The thing was simple enough; he did not attack the Chief Secretary because the right hon. Gentleman gave him a job, that of unpaid secretary for two years, and he did not attack Sir Antony MacDonnell because Sir Antony MacDonnell was responsible for the zones in the Land Act which enabled him to ask thirty-one years purchase for his land.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE: May I say that the hon. Gentleman has made so many absolute mis-statements that I would suggest he should leave me alone.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN said the statement put forward by hon. Gentlemen opposite was that they represented Ulster. He desired to contradict that statement point-blank. He denied the statement that they represented Protestant Ulster. What about the Members for South Tyrone, Fermanagh, and North Down? He took it that the Member for South Tyrone was as legitimate a Protestant, and represented as legitimate Protestant opinion as the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken, and what right had hon. Gentlemen opposite to come to that House in order to arouse the religious animosity of those opposed to Irish Catholics, and to claim that they represented 1,250,000 of Protestants which they did not? It had been said that the Nationalist Party were unreasonable in their demands. Here was a sample of the type of men who were governing Ireland at the present time. They had driven the Chief Secretary from office, the man who steered the Land Act through the House of Commons, which gave thirty-one years purchase to one of his followers. One of the most brilliant men in the Ulster Tory Party had been driven out of it because the loyal minority were determined to rule and retain in their own hands the power which they had for so long used against the public weal of Ireland. There would be no conciliation in Ireland while these Gentlemen were masters of the situation. When they could drive out the Member for Dover, and pursue with all the ruthlessness of bloodhounds an eminent Civil servant of the high qualities and great Imperial services of Sir Antony MacDonnell, who could rule 40,000,000 of Indian natives, but who they alleged was not competent to discharge the functions of the Under-Secretary at Dublin Castle, the whole matter resolved itself into one thing. The hon. Members opposite had had the power for years; they had used their power badly, and at the present moment the people of Ulster were sick to death of them.

With regard to the Anderson case, they had challenged hon. Gentlemen from Ulster repeatedly to join them in an appeal to the right hon. Gentleman for a full and impartial inquiry into this matter, and now repeated that challenge. Why did not the hon. Gentlemen join them in such an appeal? This man was dismissed by a tribunal of policemen and reinstated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover. That was the first mistake of the right hon. Gentleman, who thought that by capitulating to the Ulster Unionist Party the case of Anderson would be ended. But the Ulster Members were not thinking of the policeman at all. They knew that the shibboleths of the Party, the old cries of the Party, had disappeared, and that a better feeling was rising in Ireland. They found Anderson in their time of difficulty, and having compelled the right hon. Gentleman to capitulate, they went back to Ireland and made the case of Anderson their war cry. He hoped the Chief Secretary would speak in this debate, and that they would hear from him whether it was proposed to discuss the case of Anderson again. There seemed to be nothing that would satiate hon. Members opposite in their desire to wreak vengeance on everyone who would not submit to their sweet will in the Government of Ireland. He asked the Chief Secretary, would he stand up and vindicate the action of Sir Antony MacDonnell and Father O'Hara of the Congested Districts Board in this Anderson case, or would the right hon. Gentleman, if he did not do that, give the country an opportunity of finding out the true genesis of this case for themselves and, enable them to form a judgment of whether there was any justice in the charge of the hon. Member.

The right hon. Gentleman was now starting on a short period of office in Ireland, and he had now a chance of doing something for that Union of which he was such a stout champion. The right hon. Gentleman had been told that there were but two policies for Ireland, the policy of the Government of the majority for the minority, and the policy of the Lord-Lieutenant, which was government by the people for the people. Which would the right hon. Gentleman choose? Nothing would satiate the greed of hon. Members for Ulster for office. The right hon. Member for Dover had given in to them on every conceivable occasion; he gave the landlords £12,000,000, and they were not satisfied yet; he had trusted to the mercy of the Ascendancy Party. What did the Ascendancy Party mean for Ireland? It meant the government of Ireland by Irish men who had no Irish sympathies; who did not feel the beating pulse of Ireland; who did not understand the wrongs of their own country, and who remained there not as the English garrison, but as an Irish garrison to use the British power behind them for their own selfish interests. By the fortune of the ballot, hon. Members opposite representing Ulster recently secured a private Members night. What did they do? Did they discuss the Bann drainage, the financial condition under which the Queen's Colleges suffered, or the conditions under which the Irish labourer had to exist in Ireland? No, they took the question of institutions and convents. These were the statesmen in whose hands was the custody of Irish affairs. They had never a thought for the welfare or advancement of the country of which in this House they claimed to be so proud. Why did they not use their power for the good of Ireland? The Unionist cause would have been stronger if they had done so, but because of their combination of stupidity and venality their case had gone, while Nationalists had established their case for national self-government.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.) said he would not attempt to follow the hon. Member who had just sat down, but he could not help thinking while he was addressing the House of a remark in the very eloquent speech of the hon. Member for Cork, who said he regretted the possibility of the Motion on the Paper degenerating into a Party controversy and the real subject-matter of the Motion not receiving the careful consideration of the House. With the Motion he entirely agreed. It was very simple. It desired that further correspondence in connection with the wonderful arrangement made for the Government with regard to the position of the Permanent Under-Secretary by the Member for Dover should be placed on the Table, in order that the House and the country might be the better able to judge of the situation. The hon. and learned Member for South Shields had given the House a very earnest and faithful speech—a speech which he had no doubt would please the majority of his constituents; and for that reason he did not take any particular exception to it. But inasmuch as it contained an incrimination of Members on the Ministerial side of the House, who as honestly and sincerely as he himself endeavoured to represent those that sent them to Parliament he thought it was certainly not creditable coming from a Member of the House.

To say that any hon. Member—no matter what his politics might be—would associate himself with the coercion of his fellow-countrymen was unworthy of an English gentleman, and more especially of a Member of the British House of Commons. The Leader of the Opposition had given a few descriptions of Ulster representatives in that House. He could not call the names bitter—they were rather amusing, and especially when, as he understood, the Leader of the Opposition had never put himself to the trouble of finding out what the real situation in Ulster was and what Ulster politics were. Unless the right hon. Gentleman wanted them to come to the House and do exactly what their constituents did not want them to do there could be no application in the names which had been applied to them.

Passing from that it was a regrettable thing that the shadow of the whole business had had to pass across the political platform while the substance of all that debate, contention, and misunderstanding, and all the difficulties that the present Government were in still remained. When the correspondence that passed between the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover and Sir Antony MacDonnell was read, he was he believed the first to say that he unreservedly withdrew any suggestion or statement he had made against Sir Antony MacDonnell in view of that correspondence. In his opinion the only man in the whole transaction who had had clean hands had been Sir Antony MacDonnell. But with a Unionist Administration that certainly was not and could not—if they were to continue to represent the people who sent them to Parliament — be acceptable to the Ulster Members. Of course, if they were to ignore their constituents and to tell them that their opinions in the House of Commons were not to be considered, then he could assure them that another body of Gentlemen would be sent there in their places, and rightly so, just as certainly as the Nationalist Members if they went down into the South and West and preached Protestantism would be removed and another body of Gentlemen substituted for them. It was not a question of bowing down to the minority in Ireland at all. It was a question of public opinion in England. The Ulster Members as a minority would be altogether unsuccessful in their efforts to retard the wishes and claims of Nationalists if it were not for the fact that England and Scotland sent a majority to that House with equally strong views on this question of the legislative Union. And therefore hon. Members opposite, instead of saying that the Ulster Members were desirous of keeping a majority in Ireland under the heel of, or governed by "ascendancy," would be better occupied in educating the peope of England and Scotland, and assuring them that the only remedy was to send a majority of Members to the House of Commons in favour of giving Ireland self-government. But if they tried their hands at that the Ulster Members would give the other side of the question, and doubtless with as good results as in the past. But he considered that the Ulster Members could not dissociate themselves from the protests which the Opposition had made. He quite agreed that it did seem a little inconsistent to agree with a Motion, but not to vote for it. He did not object to hon. Members opposite holding the views they did on Home Rule. What he did object to was that they did not preach them in their constituencies. The Member recently returned for Brighton did not preach Home Rule. He would not have been returned if he had. And the Member for Dorset recently got up and admitted that he was sent there to Parliament to oppose Home Rule.

*Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER asked the hon. Member to adhere more strictly to the terms of the Resolution.

Mr. SLOAN said he would adhere strictly to the Motion, but it would be understood by hon. Gentlemen opposite that if there was no reply made it was not because one could not be given. He thought it was a regrettable thing that a Civil servant should be attacked who was not in a position to defend himself because of the office he held. He said during the last debate on the subject that it would be a blessing for the House and the country if the Permanent Under-Secretary was unmuzzled, and he believed honestly that if the Permanent Under-Secretary was unmuzzled, and allowed to defend himself, the revelations would be given which this Motion demanded. He was not satisfied that there were not other matters which that House and the country ought to know. No man who had followed the course of proceedings since the two letters were read could have any other conviction. He could not understand why the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover had had to retire because of Sir Antony MacDonnell's indefensible conduct while Sir Antony MacDonnell remained where he was. Why was Lord Dudley still at Dublin Castle?

A NATIONALIST MEMBER: Why is the Prime Minister in office?

MR. SLOAN: As he said in the North of Ireland, the Prime Minister had as much reason to resign as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover. Hon. Gentlemen opposite might think they had made a point, but it was his honest belief that the Prime Minister who acquiesced in the appointment of Sir Antony MacDonnell and who understood the whole arrangement—and Lord Dudley, who was quite competent to judge whether Sir Antony MacDonnell had violated one of the principles under which he took the appointment—that the three men should go or the three should remain. There was no other conclusion that could honestly be come to, and he was not going to allow his conscience to be stifled in the matter. He thought an injustice had been done to the Member for Dover, and if in the interests of his Party he had sacrificed his position and endangered his political reputation he was more to be pitied than laughed at, and that House was perfectly right in receiving him with sympathetic cheers. But the late Chief Secretary was not in his place. He would like to reply to him with regard to the criticisms made about Constable Anderson, but all that had been ruled out of order, and the Deputy-Speaker had told him that he must adhere strictly to the Motion.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): That case has been gone into at considerable length and there was no call to order.

MR. SLOAN: The Deputy-Speaker had distinctly told him that he was to adhere strictly to the Motion. If he adhered strictly to the Motion he could not discuss the Answer. And he wanted to know when the right hon. Member got that information from the Deputy-Speaker.

MR. DILLON: I got the information by sitting here and listening to the whole debate. It is part of the information which the Motion demands.

*MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The Motion relates to the policy and proceedings of the Irish Government, and that is one of the proceedings.

MR. SLOAN, continuing, said the hon. Member for East Mayo demanded in the House an inquiry into the whole of the Anderson case. The hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh was in the House at the time, and both he and the hon. and gallant Member said they did not object to an inquiry. He, personally, was as anxious for an inquiry into that case as in the other matter. The first information that there was a charge against Anderson was given to Sir Antony MacDonnell by Father Denis O'Hara at the Congested Districts Board's meeting. That was admitted in debate, and to say that the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh held a pistol at his head was inaccurate.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN: As a matter of fact, the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh made that statement in the House.

MR. SLOAN said in that case he would apologise. With regard to the letter which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover wrote, in which he said he would see Lord George Hamilton and see that the Press took special notice of the great administrative powers of Sir Antony MacDonnell, he wished to know what control any Government had over the Press. [AN HON. MEMBER: "That is an absurd question."] What this practically amounted to was that there was a secret conspiracy going on in the Government in regard to the appointment of the Under-Secretary, and in order that the country should not be made aware of the attitude of the Government, the Press, and particularly the Unionist Press, was to take up the cause of the Permanent Under-Secretary. His constituents had great distrust of the Government in regard to the appointment of the present Permanent Under-Secretary and the scheme of devolution. He assured the House that it was his strong desire to see this Motion carried, for nothing would give him greater pleasure than to see the blame put upon the right shoulders. If Sir Antony MacDonnell had been made the victim in this matter, then it was the duty of this or any other Government to take the responsibility and not to stand upon an indefensible platform. They ought to place before the House and the country the whole transaction in order that they might honestly be able to judge and inform their constituents in regard to the mis-statements which had been made, and made on account of the insufficiency of the information placed at their disposal. He was not so sure that the Chief Secretary would comply with the demand which had been made, but he trusted that they would have a distinct statement from the Prime Minister that if there was any further correspondence upon this question it should be laid on the Table; and if there was not any other correspondence then the right hon. Gentleman ought to point out where the action of Sir Antony MacDonnell had been indefensible, because he really could not see how a man fulfilling his own terms could have his policy described as indefensible. That being so, he associated himself entirely with the Motion before the House, which he trusted would have the desired effect.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) thought the attack which had been made upon a most distinguished Civil servant was a most serious matter. He had listened to the long speeches which had been made upon this subject, and he could not discover that the slightest case had been made out against Sir Antony MacDonnell. Why should Sir Antony's name be dragged into their quarrels in the House of Commons? The rule in such matters was to attack the Government through the Chief Secretary or the Attorney-General for Ireland, but in this case a mean attempt had been made to stab in the back a man whose great services to the Empire ought to have been sufficient to protect him from the attack which had been made upon him. When he studied this vote of censure he found that it contained no expression of regret. It was simply a request for information as to the proceedings of the Irish Government and the circumstances antecedent and subsequent to the appointment of Sir Antony MacDonnell. Information was badly wanted on those points. It was wanted because of the misrepresentation which the Prime Minister and some of his supporters had been carrying on in the country in regard to the attitude of Parties on this question. According to those misrepresentations the Conservative Party had got a most anxious feeling as to the policy the Liberals would introduce in regard to Ireland if they came into office. According to their story, the Liberals would introduce a policy of violence and disruption which would re-act injuriously on the Empire, and, on the other hand, it was suggested that the Conservative Party were the safe Party who had done nothing, who had allowed Ireland to stew in its own juice, and who, if they continued in office, would protect the great interests entrusted to their charge. That was one of the most extraordinary misrepresentations ever thrust on the country.

There was misrepresentation in regard to Sir Antony MacDonnell himself. One would think that Sir Antony MacDonnell had been discovered three months ago, that he came into Ireland last February, and that the Attorney-General for Ireland and the Solicitor-General for England at once began to attack him. It was not until to-day that the country had been sufficiently reminded that Sir Antony had been three years in Ireland. There was nothing new in the policy he had introduced. He did not think it was fair or true to charge Sir Antony MacDonnell with being the father of the policy which had been attributed to him; he did not introduce any policy in Ireland. The policy to which hon. Gentlemen opposite objected carried them further back than three years ago. Perhaps the House would like to know the actual source of this policy in Ireland. He had an extraordinary document there which would enable him to recall it to the attention of the House. It was a Whip issued about eight years ago in the following terms—

> "House of Commons. Irish Agricultural Rating. Very Important! It has been arranged that Ways and Means shall be the first order on Monday, May 6th, 1897, and that Mr. Knox shall move his Resolution demanding for Irish agricultural ratepayers the same measure of relief given to English ratepayers. We believe that in this matter Irishmen of all sections are unanimous, whatever may be their views on wider questions connected with financial relations."

Amongst those who signed that Whip was the present Attorney-General for England, and he regarded it as one of the most creditable things the hon. and learned Gentleman had ever done. The Chancellor of the Exchequer of the day refused to have anything to do with the request made by hon. Members from Ireland, and the hon. and learned Gentleman got up and fired into the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Almost every speaker on the opposite side of the House supported the hon. and learned Gentleman, and there was not a single speaker to say a word on behalf of the position the Government had taken up. At half-past ten the Government saw they must surrender and they sent out Mr. Goschen with a flag of peace. A promise was given that something would be done in the direction the hon. and learned Gentleman desired.

*Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is referring to a debate which has no reference to this Motion.

Mr. LOUGH said he had finished with that. He mentioned it only for the purpose of showing the origin of the policy which had been carried on by the Government ever since in Ireland. The concession then wrung from the Government had led to a series of reforms of greater magnitude than any that House had ever passed on behalf of the country. These reforms were carried on for four or five years until it became necessary to get some one to help the Government to carry them through. The Government looked about for the best administrator, and it was owing to the necessity of getting a strong man that Sir Antony MacDonnell was introduced. The Government policy included first of all the question of Irish land. There were Irish Land Bills in 1901 and 1902, but they both failed. It was not till Sir Antony MacDonnell came along with his practical suggestions that the Government were enabled to carry through the Bill of 1903. That measure was working successfully. Sir Antony Macdonnell was supposed to be responsible for the introduction of financial reforms in Ireland. It was not so. The House and the Government were responsible, and principles had been admitted by the Government with regard to finance, no doubt with Sir Antony's full approval, which carried them a long way in the reform of Irish government. Three Chancellors of the Exchequer during the past few years had sanctioned the principle that all economies that could be effected in Irish finance would accrue to the benefit of the Irish people. The principle had also been accepted for ten years by both sides of the House that if any money was conceded to Great Britain a grant should be made to Ireland in the same proportion, although not used for the same purpose there. These were great reforms, but it was necessary when large sums were taken from the control of the House to have some other control in Ireland, and progress had been made in that direction. An Agricultural Board had been set up in Ireland and it largely controlled finance of which that House had no control whatever. The Development Grant had been carried, and the object was to take away from the Treasury at Whitehall control of this Irish finance. These were principles on which they were proceeding at the present time in Ireland, and Sir Antony MacDonnell was not responsible for them at all. He thought it was most ungrateful that a most capable public servant who was introduced to help the Government in their policy, should be subjected to unworthy attacks in that House.

Another proceeding in Ireland was the reduction of the police force. That was by far the most striking and dramatic thing which had been done in Ireland, perhaps, for fifty years. If the present system of reducing the police force continued for a few years, the Royal Irish Constabulary would have disappeared altogether. Sir Antony MacDonnell was not responsible for this. It was the Irish Government that was doing it, and in this whole field of reform it was the Government who were responsible and not the Under-Secretary, on whom the Prime Minister had meanly tried to place the responsibility for the policy which he himself ought properly to regard as his own.

He did not believe anybody knew what a tremendous sheaf of legislation for Ireland this Government had put through. Sixty-two Acts had been passed since 1896, among the most important carried since the Act of Union, touching every sphere of Irish government, and if anyone asked him to say what was the principle underlying those Acts, he should say, although the form was different the principle was the same as that which animated the late Mr. Gladstone with regard to his policy towards Ireland—first to buy out the landlords and then to extend self-government. The present Government had done much towards that. Summed up in a single sentence, this Government had been trying to do in fifteen years what Mr. Gladstone tried to effect in fifteen months. They had been ten years carrying out these gigantic reforms in Ireland. The Government had carried out their policy both of administration and legislation in Ireland very skilfully, but the Opposition had also done their part. Never until the last few years had the Irish question not been treated as a Party question. The Liberals had supported the Government all through in these great measures. He had supported the present Prime Minister as loyally, with regard to Ireland, for the last ten years as he supported Mr. Gladstone in trying to carry out his reforms in the previous Parliament, and although he was known as an opponent of the present Government, he had assisted them in their Irish policy in every way. That was why Liberals felt the extraordinary situation raised by the Government now of trying to repudiate their past and trying to appeal again to that bad feeling of hatred to the Irish, which no doubt was strongly rooted in this country.

The attack upon Liberals in connection with this matter had been most undeserved. For ten years, at any rate, their conduct had been everything that anyone could desire it should be. They had not put any obstacle in the way of the Government. Many of the great measures could have been completely wrecked if the Leader of the Opposition or any important body on the Opposition side had desired to do so, but there was no such desire. It was therefore very ungrateful of the right hon. Gentleman that he should attack Liberals on what he supposed to be their unconstitutional attitude with regard to Ireland. Hon. Gentlemen opposite were also acting in an ungrateful spirit in saying that immediately the Liberals came into office it would be necessary to make the Irish question a Party question once more.

An appeal was lately made from a quarter which they all expected for the Liberal leaders to say what they would not do if they came into power with regard to Ireland. He would strongly advise any right hon. friend of his not to do so. They could never be sure what they would do with regard to Ireland. The whole path of Irish legislation was strewn with the broken promises of great men. He would remind the House of pledges given even by Mr. Gladstone in 1881 and 1882. Mr. Gladstone spoke of "wading through rapine to the dismemberment of the Empire," and shortly afterwards he proposed Home Rule. The late Lord Salisbury said county government was a worse thing than Home Rule. Nevertheless in the present Parliament the late Lord Salisbury was responsible for giving county government in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham said land purchase was more dangerous than Home Rule, and that the rents would have to be collected at the points of English bayonets. Yet the right hon. Gentleman had supported the Irish Land Purchase Act, and the rents had never been collected at the bayonet point. Every pledge given with regard to Ireland had been broken, and the safe thing for any

Government to do was to go on quietly as the present Prime Minister had gone on. The Prime Minister had suggested reforms, and when they had secured the approval of the Irish Party he had put them through as quietly as he could.

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover said one reason why he abandoned the policy of devolution was that it had not been supported by hon. Gentlemen below the gangway on this side and because it did not command the support of any large section in Ireland. That was hardly a fair thing to say. The thing was not brought forward seriously; it was never embodied in a Bill. He thought the repudiation of devolution or forward progress with regard to Irish policy was not due to any defects in the policy itself but to the exigencies in which the Government was placed with regard to British matters, and if the Prime Minister could see his way to five years more office he would see his way to other reforms in Ireland which would go far to satisfy the aspirations of the Irish people. He desired to thank the Government for the great work which had been done on behalf of Ireland during the last ten years. It was the greatest pity that this turn should be given to the question at this time, but, after all, the progress of matters in Ireland rested not with the Conservatives or Liberals, but with Members below the gangway, and so long as they continued to protest against the injustice with which Ireland had been treated and to express the determination to win complete control over their own affairs, there would be no course open to either Party in this House except progress along the road that would satisfy those demands.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.) said the debate would give very little satisfaction to any one except those who were the enemies of the Union. The Member for Dover fell into the grip of a strong man, and it would always be a mystery to many of them how he was allowed to come under the influence of Sir Antony MacDonnell, and how Sir Antony, able and honest though he undoubtedly was, but opposed to every principle which lay at the foundation of the Unionist Party, was ever allowed to occupy the office he did.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND.

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [9th May], "That, in view of recent events in Ireland, and the revelations which caused the resignation of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover, it is in the highest degree desirable, in the public interest, that the correspondence and other information necessary to enable the House of Commons and the country to form a judgment on the policy and proceedings of the Irish Government, connected with and subsequent to the appointment of Sir Antony MacDonnell, be communicated to Parliament."—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Question again proposed.

MR. T. L. CORBETT, continuing his speech, said this debate could give no true satisfaction to any believer in the Unionist cause. The only satisfaction it could give was to the Members of the Nationalist Party and to that section of the Liberal Party that still believed in Home Rule. He hoped there was reason to believe that that section of the Liberal Party which still believed in Home Rule was lessening in numbers. A large section of that Party was now shaking itself free from Home Rule, but the Leader of the Opposition still clung to separation in its boldest form. When they were asked why the Ulster Members were not going to vote for this Motion, their answer was that it was because they had no faith in the Leader of the Opposition and that section of the Party opposite to which he belonged. Although they had been accused by the Nationalist Party of being a foolish Party, at all events they were not foolish enough to jump from the frying-pan into the fire. So long as the nominal Leader of the Opposition persisted in believing in the old shibboleth of Home Rule, so long could they give him no definite support.

They were all only too familiar with the sad history that had led up to this debate. The right hon. Member for Dover, than whom few Members of the House had more brilliant gifts, had been led astray by the brilliancy of those gifts until he dreamed of an ideal for Ireland that never could be realised. He allowed sentimentality to govern his rule in Ireland, especially during the later months of his career in Ireland, rather than common-sense. In order to conciliate the Nationalist Party he adopted as a colleague an avowed and open Nationalist. Sir Antony MacDonnell, they all admitted, was a strong man and was, they all believed, an honest man. He had done great service to the Empire in India, and none were more ready to concede that than the Ulster Members. But his views were absolutely opposed to every principle that lay at the very foundation of the Irish Unionist Party. That, it seemed to him, justified the action of the Ulster Members in abstaining from voting in the debate. It would ever be a mystery why Sir Antony MacDonnell was appointed by a Unionist Government, holding, as he did, views diametrically opposed to all the principles of the Unionist Party. It was a mystery to him why Sir Antony MacDonnell was allowed to go on as Under-Secretary under the new Chief Secretary. He believed that every Member of the Irish Unionist Party believed thoroughly in the new Chief Secretary. They believed he had both courage and sympathy and was free from sentiment and sentimentality. But he could have no lasting success—and this was the meaning of their protest, to-day and of their continued protest until the reason for it was removed—unless he was served by loyal servants. Dublin was 500 miles from London, and, in the words of the hon. Member for Cork, the real power lay with the Under-Secretary in Ireland. It was because of their experience of the Government of Ireland during the last two years that they would be compelled, although loyal supporters of the Government for the last thirty years, to abstain from voting in the division on this debate.

MR. DILLON said that on the 20th February last the House of Commons was told by the hon. Member for Greenwich that the whole of the facts connected with this monstrous case were before the House and the country, and that they had nothing to do but to form their judgment. The First Lord of the Treasury stated that he saw no reason why the correspondence which had taken place between Sir Antony MacDonnell and the Member for Dover should be published, and he thought the whole incident might be now consigned to oblivion. On the 22nd of February the hon. and learned Member for Waterford moved the adjournment of the House upon the subject and the House then had communicated to them the most remarkable correspondence which had ever taken place in connection with the government of Ireland for the last quarter of a century, but even after that correspondence was published the whole matter was left in a condition of mystery and the House had been driven painfully and laboriously to grope its way towards the facts. Confusion was rendered worse confounded by the fact that on the 6th of March the resignation of the right hon. Member for Dover was communicated to the House. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover had on the previous 21st and 22nd of February, with his usual eloquence and superb command of language, addressed the House in justification of his action, and had proved, at any rate to the satisfaction of his own Party, that his hands were clean so far as that unclean thing devolution was concerned. The right hon. Gentleman in two long speeches informed the House that he had had nothing to say to such proposals, that the moment he became aware that such proposals were contemplated by Lord Dunraven, and before he knew that the Under-Secretary had anything to do with them he took a step which was exceedingly unusual on the part of a Cabinet Minister. He wrote to *The Times* and repudiated those proposals for devolution. Those were the main particulars connected with this transaction, and the next they heard of it was the resignation of the right hon. Member for Dover. The House had listened that afternoon to the explanation of the right hon. Member for Dover, who they were all glad to see restored to health, with great sympathy and eager curiosity. Their curiosity was not satisfied, for the reason that the right hon. Gentleman made in no sense any explanation as to why he resigned, and the House of Commons with regard to that matter was as much in the dark as ever it had been. Why, if the right hon. Gentleman resigned after he had proved that he had nothing to do with the scheme of devolution, did his two colleagues, who had never denied their part of the transaction, remain in the Irish Government. The Lord-Lieutenant had stated that he was with Lord Dunraven and Sir Antony MacDonnell in this matter, and that the programme of Lord Dunraven was drawn up with his approval. Why, then, did the Lord-Lieutenant and Sir Antony MacDonnell remain in the Government of Ireland when the Chief Secretary had resigned?

When they came to the details of this extraordinary and monstrous transaction there were many Questions that had not yet been answered, but to which the House of Commons was entitled to an Answer. In the first place, in a letter addressed to Sir Antony MacDonnell on December 26th, 1902, the then Irish Secretary the right hon. Member for Dover said—

> "I ciphered the purport of your letter to the Prime Minister and received his concurrence by telegram and by letter this morning."

They all remembered the purport of that letter. That was the letter by Sir Antony MacDonnell in which he set forth the conditions on which he would accept office. The Chief Secretary for Ireland and Lord Lansdowne sought him out, and, despite his own misgivings, persuaded Sir Antony MacDonnell to accept the Under-Secretaryship, and the right hon. Member for Dover said he was deeply grateful to Sir Antony MacDonnell for coming to his rescue. Sir Antony MacDonnell accepted the office forced upon him upon certain conditions — one was the settling of the question of University education in Ireland on lines acceptable to the majority of the Irish people, and another was that he was to set to work to arrange for the co-ordination and control of all the Departments of Irish Government. The letter containing those conditions was ciphered to the Prime Minister, and the Prime Minister concurred with them. There could be no doubt of that, because the letter of the Chief Secretary was written on the morning after he had received the letter from the Prime Minister confirming the appointment. The House ought to see the letter and the telegram from the Prime Minister, because, according to that letter, the Prime Minister was a party to the whole policy, and there was no conceivable reason why the Member for Dover should be driven from office and the Prime Minister should remain. The Prime Minister's letter, which formed an integral part of the correspondence, should be produced. It could only be withheld for the purpose of sheltering the Prime Minister.

Sir Antony MacDonnell was sent to Ireland for many purposes: he was sent to end the policy of coercion and to administer a policy of conciliation; he was sent to Ireland to settle the land question; and to settle the question of higher University education on lines acceptable to the majority of the Irish people. He set to work on the matter as soon as the Land Act was passed, and entered into negotiations with people in Belfast, and offered Trinity College a further endowment of £10,000 if they would consent to a settlement of the University question on those lines. Then in January, 1904, Lord Dunraven's letter appeared, sketching out a plan for the settlement of the University question, and when it was remembered that Sir Antony MacDonnell, with the authority of the Prime Minister, had been going round making terms and offering vast sums of money for the settlement of the University question on certain lines laid down in Lord Dunraven's letter, it was absurd to contend that the Irish people were not justified in believing that Lord Dunraven's letter embodied the Government proposals. What was their amazement, then, to hear the Prime Minister declare that he knew nothing of the negotiations which had been proceeding on this subject. That declaration made a very large demand on their credulity, and he, for one, declined to accept it. The University question sharply divided public opinion in Ireland, just as much as the question of devolution. Why, then, were the negotiations with regard to the foremost question allowed to pass unchallenged by the Cabinet while the action of the Under-Secretary in reference to devolution was condemned. It was admitted that the Prime Minister was a party to the sending of Sir Antony MacDonnell to Ireland with special powers to settle and reorganise a system of Irish government, and yet they were asked to believe that for two years during which the subject was continually discussed with Lord Dunraven neither the Member for Dover nor the Prime Minister took the trouble to ascertain what were the lines on which Sir Antony MacDonnell was proceeding in pursuance of that object. They were asked to believe that having sent a special agent to Ireland to carry out the work of reorganisation, and the subject having been continually discussed between the right hon. Member for Dover, Lord Dunraven, and Sir Antony MacDonnell, neither the Member for Dover nor the Prime Minister even took the trouble to ascertain what plan was proposed. It was still more extraordinary to have it suggested that they had not made up their minds as to the line on which the reorganisation should proceed. It was incredible that the House should be told that Sir Antony MacDonnell was sent to Ireland two and a-half years ago on a special mission to reorganise the whole system of government in Ireland and up to this hour the Government were unable to say upon what lines the reorganisation was intended to be carried out. They were asked to believe that this great wise Imperial Ministry—the only Ministry, as they declared, fit to govern this great Empire—had, in dealing with a country so difficult to deal with as Ireland, sent a special mission to reorganise its government without having made up their own minds what changes they intended to introduce. It was incredible.

Now he came to another question. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover in his short statement threw little light on the subject of the missing letter written to him by Sir Antony MacDonnell between the issue of the first and second manifestoes of the Reform Association. The first manifesto was issued on the 30th August, 1904, and shortly after that Sir Antony MacDonnell wrote a letter to the right hon. Gentleman stating that he was engaged with Lord Durnaven in drawing up a scheme of this character. Now that letter was vitally important. The right hon. Member for Dover, in a previous debate, admitted that he received the letter, but he said he had lost it, and could not recall its terms. Yet the right hon. Member had added—

> "If that letter could be recovered the last cloud of suspicion would be dissipated."

How could he say that when he could not remember the letter or anything in it? The letter was indeed a link in the chain which was of most vital importance, and it acquired additional importance in connection with the proposed formation of a new political Party. It would be remembered that when the right hon. Gentleman landed in England after having been abroad he suddenly took up *The Times* and discovered in it the second manifesto, in which the new financial board and the new statutory body for purposes of legislation were set forth, and that he instantly felt impelled to write to that newspaper condemning the proposals and dissociating himself from them. But why should the right hon. Gentleman repudiate the manifesto if, as he had said, he had then not the faintest idea that the Under-Secretary had anything to do with the drafting of it? The right hon. Gentleman's story did not hang well together. It all showed the immense importance of the missing letter. If the right hon. Gentleman did not know that Sir Antony MacDonnell was mixed up in the scheme, what object had he in writing to *The Times*. Who made him Lord Dunraven's keeper? What right had he to say to Lord Dunraven, "You shall not propose devolution"? The matter was still full of mystery and required further explanation. He had been groping about for some key to the business and he thought he had found it in the proposal made in the autumn of 1903 to form a new political Party in Ireland. He held that they were entitled to the details of that proposal, and what were the relations of the Chief Secretary and his Under-Secretary to the project. He would like to recall to the memory of the House a statement made by Lord Dunraven on the subject. He said—

> "As is very natural, I had many long conversations with Mr. George Wyndham and with Sir Antony MacDonnell on all kinds of subjects and topics connected with Ireland—not conversations with the Chief Secretary or Under-Secretary, but perfectly informal conversations and talks with Mr. Wyndham and Sir Antony MacDonnell. Among other subjects we have often discussed . . . and the possibility in fact of creating anything like a Moderate Central Party . . . I thought it perfectly useless to start or to help to create a Moderate Party on a purely academic basis. I thought it absolutely essential to have a positive, constructive, democratic policy—the policy which has been wrought out in our proposals for devolution. On those ideas, broadly speaking, I have talked over and over again both with Mr. Wyndham and Sir Antony MacDonnell. . . . My impression also was that Mr. Wyndham saw no particular objection to a general scheme of administrative reform proposed by perfectly independent and private individuals being put forward for public criticism and discussion. I remember very well having conversations with Mr. Wyndham and Sir Antony MacDonnell, not on any particular scheme or idea, but on the subject of a Moderate Party generally, and it was suggested—I do not remember by whom—that Sir Antony MacDonnell should invite some gentlemen to meet me who might be useful to me in forming the nucleus of such a Party. That idea was abandoned. I have a letter from Sir Antony MacDonnell dated October, 1903, in which he says: 'I have been thinking over our conversation of the other day.' He abandoned the idea of asking the gentlemen to meet me, because, as he writes: 'the business would speedily become known, and it would be said that Lord Dunraven was forming a new Irish Party.' To that Sir Antony MacDonnell did not see any particular objection; but he went on to say, 'if the first meeting were held in my house or at my invitation everyone would say that Mr. Wyndham was a prime mover in the business. Any help I can give I shall be happy to give by supplying you with facts and information, but I think, and in this Mr. Wyndham, to whom I have spoken, agrees with me, it is better I should not appear prominently or even to the extent of inviting men to meet you.'"

In other words, the Chief Secretary agreed that the Under-Secretary should give the Irish Reform Association all the assistance in his power provided he was not found out. But the Chief Secretary and the Under-Secretary were found out, owing to the loyal co-operation of their colleagues the Attorney-General for Ireland and the Solicitor-General.

Mr. WILLIAM MOORE. Hear, hear! They were perfectly loyal.

Mr. DILLON said that might be the hon. Gentleman's idea of loyalty, but it was not his idea of loyalty that one member of a Government or Party should spy upon a colleague.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.). If the hon. Gentleman refers to me as having spied on the proceedings of a colleague, I utterly repudiate the transaction. I had no idea who was at the bottom of this devolution scheme. I denounced that scheme, and I have nothing whatever to retract from my criticism.

THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. James Campbell, Dublin University): I say that the suggestion that either my right hon. friend or I have spied on the right hon. Member for Dover is unworthy, and one for which there is not the shadow of a foundation. Until the disclosures in the House I had no knowledge that my right hon. friend the Member for Dover had anything to do with the devolution scheme.

Mr. DILLON said he had not referred to the Solicitor-General for Ireland, but to the much more distinguished person—the Solicitor-General for England. He repeated that the Attorney-General for Ireland and the English Solicitor-General did spy upon their colleague.

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman has repudiated the suggestion, and I think the hon. Member should withdraw it.

Mr. DILLON: I will withdraw the word "spying" if the Attorney-General takes exception to it, but if he had no suspicion, why did he go to the North of Ireland and raise an outcry for a revelation as to who was at the bottom of the scheme? But what about the

Solicitor-General for England who, throwing aside all the ties that bind gentlemen in a Government together, went to a meeting in order to denounce a Civil servant? Where did he get the knowledge from which enabled him to do that?

MR. WILLIAM MOORE. Everybody knew it in Ireland.

MR. DILLON: Everybody knew it except the two innocent law officers of the Crown! Why, they had not even a suspicion! They in the Castle did not know what all Ireland knew. That was rather an unfortunate interruption, and he repeated that the Solicitor-General for England was guilty of a most scandalous breach of traditions of honour in his treatment of his colleague. If such action were persisted in no Government could hold long together. As it was, he had succeeded in driving out of political life for the time being the Member for Dover against whom he declared war, and in doing so he had set an example which few Ministers in this country would care to follow.

He would recur to the question of the formation of the new Party. Where was the need for secrecy? All the proceedings in connection with the Land Conference were carried out in the light of day, but the fact that in his letter Lord Dunraven laid stress on the fact that the hon. Member for Dover felt it necessary to maintain secrecy showed that the whole of this transaction was of a nature of a political intrigue. The object was to break up Parties in Ireland and to start a new Party. Here was the hon. Member for Dover's account of it—

> "Not this year—but in the year 1903, just after the Land Act had been passed—at a time when Lord Dunraven received the compliments he had earned from all sections of opinion. . . . It was at that time that Lord Dunraven came to me and discussed the chances and prospects of a Moderate Party in Ireland. . . . And still I am in favour, if it were possible . . . of Lord Dunraven or any one else forming a Moderate Party in the centre or South of Ireland."

And then, alluding to a published article of Lord Dunraven's which was the result of these conferences, the hon. Member for Dover says—

> "He" (Lord Dunraven) "speaks of land purchase, of education, of the condition of the people, of the labourers, of fiscal reform."

And after that he asks, in heavily leaded type—

> "How is further co-operation practicable?"

And the article goes on to say—

> "The questions enumerated sufficiently prove the existence of a vast field on which the efforts of all men of all creeds, classes, and politics can be profitably employed."

The hon. Member for Dover adds—

> "I agree with every word of that."

All this had reference, not to the co-operation of individuals or Parties, but to the formation of a new Party. Now what he would like to know was, what was to be the programme of that new Party, and out of what elements was it proposed to construct it.

There was another question which required explanation. Why was Sir Antony MacDonnell censured by the Cabinet? What had he done to justify that censure? Was he warned beforehand that his conduct was going to be considered and did he submit any defence, and, if so, would that defence be produced? Again, what was Sir Antony's present position? Had the attacks on him ceased? He had been made the subject of one of the most cruel and scandalous libels ever made upon a public servant. Had that been dropped? The Orange Party had sworn by all their gods—if they recognised any gods—that they would not abate one jot or one tittle of their hostility to the present Government until Sir Antony's scalp had been handed over to them! The old disgraceful weapon had been brought out again that night. They had again heard of Constable Anderson. Hon. Members opposite never tried to help the Nationalists in getting a full public investigation into that case. They only said they had no objection. Never against a servant of the Crown had so brutal and calumnious a charge been brought as that in connection with Constable Anderson. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover defended Sir Antony MacDonnell in that case, but it was a very lame defence indeed, and if only the Government would give them a full investigation he would undertake to prove that Anderson was properly and justly removed from the police force and that he was not fit to serve in the police force of any civilised country. His record was scandalous. He again challenged the Government to produce their records.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT: Will the hon. Gentleman repeat his statement outside the House of Commons?

Mr. DILLON: I shall repeat it if the Government will give me the files.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT: Let the hon. Gentleman have the courage of his opinions and repeat his statement out of the House.

Mr. DILLON said that was a perfectly fair challenge. He fully recognised it—he made no quarrel at all—that to attack the character of any individual in that House under the privileges of the House was an extreme proceeding, though he was not prepared to admit it was always cowardly. In this matter they had acted in a most cruel and brutal manner. The charge was that Father Denis O'Hara, out of mere vengeance, because this Protestant constable wanted to marry a Catholic girl, went to Sir Antony MacDonnell and that they both entered into a conspiracy to ruin this man, without any justification. Was that a cowardly charge?

Mr. WILLIAM MOORE: It is true.

Mr. DILLON said it was as false a charge as had ever been made. It was a foul and false charge for which there was not a shred of justification. That was the ground on which he justified himself in taking the extreme course he had taken.

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: But the hon. Member should not attribute a falsehood to another hon. Member.

Mr. DILLON: Pardon me, but his statement is false. I wish to be quite clear on this matter. If an hon. Member of this House in his place makes a charge against a personal friend of mine, which charge I know of my own knowledge to be false, am I not entitled to say here that it is false?

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I think the hon. Member under those circumstances would be entitled to say that the hon. Member opposite was repeating a charge which was not true, but it is quite out of order to accuse an hon. Member of telling a deliberate falsehood.

Mr. DILLON said he did not attribute to the hon. Member a deliberate falsehood, but what he said was that it was a false charge. He had only made that charge because the hon. Member opposite had accused him of making a cowardly use of his privileges in this House. He fully recognised that he was taking an extreme course, but he did so on behalf of two men who could not speak for themselves, and who had been made the victims of this most scandalous charge without a shred of justification. He would not pursue that point any further, because anybody who knew the facts knew how monstrous the charge was. Take the case of Sir Antony MacDonnell. He had no responsibility whatever for the dismissal of Constable Anderson, and he had no responsibility for the refusal to reinstate him. He asked the Chief Secretary to promise them a full inquiry into the matter. One of the scandals in the Constable Anderson case, however, was the reinstatement of the man, carried out against the protest of the Constabulary authorities in Ireland as the result of political pressure in the House. When the hon. Member for South Belfast found fault with the statement of the hon. Member for North Kilkenny they were able to point out that the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh boasted in the House, and also in a speech which he made at Portadown, that he and the Ulster Members had put a pistol to the head of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover, and had compelled him to reinstate Constable Anderson by threatening opposition in the House of Commons. As regarded Constable Anderson's case, it was disgraceful, but the disgraceful part about it was the reinstatement of a policeman who was unfit to serve in the police force as a concession to political pressure in the House. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh, oh!"] The attack upon Sir Antony MacDonnell was in full swing. The Ulster Unionists, both inside and outside the House of Commons, had announced their intention that they would not cease their agitation until Sir Antony MacDonnell was removed. On April 28th, upon an Ulster platform, the hon. Member for South Antrim said—

> "When these excellent statesmen had once started on this game of giving each other away there was no holding them in."

The hon. Member went on to say—

> "Lord Lansdowne next came to the front and informed us that it was largely owing to him that they had had the inestimable blessing of having Sir Antony MacDonnell as Under-Secretary. Here is one of the leading members of the Cabinet in whose Unionist principles we have up to this date had absolute confidence, and now we find him a secret and a dangerous enemy. If there are any more Lansdownes or Wyndhams whose names would be dragged into the light by these revelations then most emphatically I say let us learn the worst. At the present moment the idea has got abroad that the famous letters read to the House of Commons are by no means the only compromising documents. If there are any more then let us have them no matter whom they may implicate."

Commenting upon this speech the *Belfast News Letter* said—

> "The Foreign Secretary is an important member of the Cabinet, and has done good work, but he is not indispensable, and if he be playing the part attributed to him in Mr. Craig's speech, he ought not to remain where he is."

Apparently Lord Lansdowne was the next member of the Government who would have to go. This gave one an idea of the policy adopted by the men who were really governing Ireland. They had now a Chief Secretary who imagined that because he had taken a motor-car ride to Belmullet he understood the Irish question. Nobody who knew anything about the affairs of Ireland imagined for a moment that the present Chief Secretary would have any voice in the government of Ireland during his short tenure of office. The men who really governed Ireland were the Solicitor-General for England, the Attorney-General for Ireland, and Lord Londonderry. Those were the men who governed Ireland, and the present Chief Secretary would be allowed to keep his position so long as he obeyed those gentlemen and no longer.

What was the policy in Ireland with which they were face to face? They had in vain asked the Government to give them the details of the policy which they had sent Sir Antony MacDonnell to carry out. What was the policy with which the country was confronted? There was a deliberate campaign to organise bogus outrages. The police had instructions to be active in this matter. These outrages were being manufactured by the police, under the orders of Dublin Castle.

The CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.): Does the hon. Member suggest that that policy has been begun within the last week or two?

Mr. DILLON said that he certainly suggested that the system was new within the last four or five weeks, and that it was being actively worked up by the police. He had no doubt that before long the police would be committing the outrages themselves. When the Castle wanted outrages they would get them. While the Land Act was being strangled deliberately by the Government, while all the promises which had been held out were being falsified, and while the Irish people were being driven to exasperation and madness, the Government were deliberately laying the foundation for an attempt to capture the constituencies in England for a policy of coercion.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It appears to me that the latter part of the hon. Member's speech travelled a good deal beyond the Amendment before the House. It deals not with the administration of the present Chief Secretary, but exclusively with the period in which the right hon. Member for Dover was Chief Secretary. Nevertheless, I do not know that the latter part of the hon. Gentleman's speech was wholly wasted, or that I regret its being delivered. It throws a certain light on the allegation made throughout these debates with amazing assurance that it is not the Chief Secretary when he is in the Cabinet, but the Under-Secretary, who directs the policy of the Government in Ireland. If that proposition be true, it is the Under-Secretary who is now manufacturing crime in Ireland; it is the Under-Secretary who is producing bogus outrages; it is the Under-Secretary who is preparing this nefarious scheme to capture the constituencies of England. Well, this charge, as I need hardly say, this allegation against the Under-Secretary is absolutely preposterous. Other charges against him, I think, have been made totally without foundation, and perhaps those who made the other charges of which I speak will take consolation from the charges now made, and think that charges should not be made against the Under-Secretary, but against the Chief Secretary for the time being or against the Government of which that Chief Secretary is a member.

I thought that by far the most relevant part of the speech of the hon. Member was the earlier portion, in which he made a violent but not at all an improper attack on myself, and, following the example of, I think, almost all the speakers in this debate—certainly following the example of the right hon. Gentleman who moved the Resolution—stated that it was not the Under-Secretary at all, that it was not so much my right hon. friend the Member for Dover who was implicated or attacked by this Resolution, but that it was myself in the character of Prime Minister. Well, I think that is quite right. I think the attacks should be made on the Prime Minister, and not upon a late member of the Government or upon a permanent official; and I shall certainly have no hesitation in taking upon my shoulders the burden, if burden it be, of the sort of attack which has been made on that side of the House, and which, I am sorry to say, in some particulars has found an echo even on this side of the House.

Now, what is the charge? The charge, broadly speaking, is this—that when my right hon. friend the Member for Dover became, on taking his seat in the Cabinet, the dominant partner in Irish administration, the Minister really responsible to the Cabinet in the first place, and to the House in the second place, for Irish administration, a new policy was initiated, a policy which, I understand, is sometimes described as a policy of conciliation, and sometimes as a policy of devolution, and that my right hon. friend started this new policy with the full consent and full knowledge, presumably, of my colleagues, but certainly of myself. Now, let us consider that point. In the first place, on what evidence is this charge, for what it may be worth, based? It is based, according to the right hon. Gentleman opposite, primarily upon a speech of Lord Dudley's. It appears—a fact that I did not know before—that Lord Dudley, on going over to Ireland, made a speech in which he said that Ireland should be governed according to Irish ideas.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: It has been quoted half a dozen times.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): You do not read the newspapers. [Laughter and cries of "Order."]

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, I hope that in my quotation I have not done him an injustice. It appears that Lord Dudley went over and made this speech, from which it was interpreted that as the phrase "govern Ireland according to Irish ideas" can only mean that Ireland is to be governed according to the ideas the Irish have of the proper relations between Irish administration and the Imperial Parliament, this was practically a statement by Lord Dudley that he was in favour of some form of Home Rule. I need hardly say that the interpretation is wholly incorrect [Cries of "Oh"], and the last charge that can justly be made against Lord Dudley is that he has any leanings towards a Home-Rule policy. That is the first evidence which seemed greatly to impress the right hon. Gentleman, so that it figured during a full third of his speech as giving the keynote of his whole argument.

Well, what are the next arguments brought forward? The next arguments deal with the two letters, which were read in the House at an earlier period this session, and in which the Under-Secretary and my right hon. friend exchanged their views, exchanged ideas as to the terms of the policy which was to be pursued, and on which the Under-Secretary was prepared to take office. It is gathered, I understand, partly from the terms of those letters, partly from the views which Sir

Antony MacDonnell holds, or is supposed to hold, with regard to the views of hon. Gentlemen opposite, that the mere fact of his appointment, and the mere fact that in appointing him my right hon. friend clearly thought that he was having an Under-Secretary with whom he could work in the full consciousness that they were dealing with a policy which the Under-Secretary was ready heartily to support—that appears to be regarded as an adequate reason for supposing that there was what is called a new departure in Irish policy initiated at the time my right hon. friend became a member of the Cabinet. In regard to the original appointment of Sir Antony MacDonnell, the House will remember that Sir Antony MacDonnell's friends had put before him the difficulties which anybody might expect on taking the office of Under-Secretary, Ireland being what it is and he holding the opinions which he did hold. Well, it must be remembered that my right hon. friend the late Chief Secretary had also present in his mind that in this temporary appointment he also might be brought into difficulty, and that the mere fact that the Under-Secretary was supposed not to share to the full extent the views about Irish government held by my right hon. friend might hamper him in dealing with matters such as the Land Bill, about which there might be perfect agreement between them; and those difficulties undoubtedly existed. They were undoubtedly foreseen; but I think it probable that if both parties had fully foreseen all the difficulties the appointment might never have been made. I doubt whether Sir Antony MacDonnell would have rejected the advice of his friends, and it is possible that my right hon. friend might have taken a different view. But do not let the House suppose that the appointment was made by my right hon. friend without carefully thinking the whole matter over, or taking advice from those whom he thought best qualified to inform him of Sir Antony MacDonnell's administrative career, his capacity, and character, and power of doing good work for Ireland. He did make full inquiries in that respect; and I do not think even my hon. friends from Ulster, among whom are to be found the severest critics, both of Sir Antony MacDonnell, my right hon. friend, and myself, will refuse to admit that, at all events during the early part of the administrative work of Sir Antony MacDonnell, even they had little cause to complain of the action of the Government of which Sir Antony MacDonnell was a servant.

What were the objects which my right hon. friend the Member for Dover had discussed with Sir Antony MacDonnell as being objects that might well occupy in the immediate future the attention of any persons responsible for Irish administration? They were, in the first place, the maintenance of law and order, and the maintenance of law and order in Ireland, as everybody is aware, occasionally involves what is known in the phraseology of controversial politics as coercion. The first point upon which they were agreed was the necessity of maintaining law and order.

Mr. DILLON: Not by coercion.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: At the cost, if need be, of coercion.

Mr. DILLON: No, no!

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I say yes.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Quote the letter.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It will not be denied that the maintenance of law and order appeared in the letter. It will not be denied that immediately after taking office Sir Antony MacDonnell found himself administering parts of Ireland under the Coercion Act, and the inference I should think would hardly be refused that Sir Antony MacDonnell, at all events, conceived himself in carrying out this policy of so-called coercion to be carrying out the policy of law and order which was the first item mentioned in the letter to which reference has been made.

What was the second item? The second item was land purchase. On land purchase the House were agreed while the Bill was passing through the various stages in this House and in the other, and I hope that the agreement still subsists; but, at all events, it lasted long enough to justify my right hon. friend in the choice which he had made in carrying out the work which he had set himself to accomplish, and I presume no charge will be levelled against Sir Antony or my right hon. friend or myself in connection with the scheme of land purchase.

The next point, if I remember rightly, was co-ordination. With regard to co-ordination, I have to remind the House that earlier in the debate the Member for South Shields appeared, with a—fortunately for him—felicitous ignorance of Irish administration, to suppose that co-ordination involved some form of what is known as devolution, or was connected in some way with devolution. No man who has the smallest knowledge of the matter could ever entertain such an idea. It is totally inconsistent with the facts of this particular case and with the facts which preceded it in the history of previous Administrations. Let me inform the learned Gentleman the Member for South Shields, who based, I think, a large part of his speech upon this blunder of his own——

MR. ROBSON: I simply quoted the words of the letter; I did not identify co-ordination and devolution. I quoted the words of the letter, co-ordination involving the direction and control of the administrative machinery of Irish government.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR. If the hon. Gentleman is prepared to stultify his whole speech and say that in using that phrase he made no reference to devolution, or other forms of alteration of constitutional forms in the direction of Home Rule I, of course, accept his explanation. If, on the other hand, he did commit the blunder, which I certainly thought he did commit, of confounding this co-ordination with the scheme of devolution I ought to inform him and the House that, while devolution is of the essence of a process of decentralisation, the matter dealt with in the letter is in the nature of centralisation. It is not devolution, but exactly the opposite process; it is a process which many Under-Secretaries before the present distinguished holder of the place have desired to carry out, and on which, indeed, I think, one distinguished gentleman who served under me wrote lately to the papers and said he put it before me as a scheme which he, in his term of office, had desired to see carried out. This process of centralisation may be good or bad, but what it aims at is to take the various independent boards of Ireland —I mean boards independent of every official under the Chief Secretary—and place them under the control of the Permanent Secretary as well. That is the object which these schemes have in view. It may be good or it may be bad, it may be right or it may be wrong, that the Local Government Board in Ireland, for instance, should report to the Chief Secretary through the Under-Secretary, instead of reporting, as it does at present, directly to the Chief Secretary; but, whether it be good or bad, it has nothing whatever to do either with Home Rule, or with devolution, or with a new policy for Ireland, or with so-called conciliation, or with anything else that has come into controversy this evening. So much for that.

Now I come to the last object, as far as I remember, mentioned in the letter, and that last object is University education. In the letter Sir Antony MacDonnell expresses his desire to see a settlement of that question on the general lines proposed by me. The general lines proposed by me are well known to all who are students of the question and care to see what is to be said about it, and if they will look at the document in which those ideas appear in their most authoritative form they will see that in that public pamphlet or letter I distinctly laid down that this question, important as I always believed it and still believe it to be, is one that cannot be settled on ordinary Party lines or by the ordinary Party machine, and that was obviously known to the Under-Secretary when he made the offer, as it is known to everybody who has studied the question. What happened? I think this is the only part of the case which really requires any explanation or defence from those who have studied this controversy in a fair spirit. It is said by the right hon. Gentleman that the Chief

Secretary had no right to endeavour, or travelled beyond his duty in endeavouring, in any way to see whether the various educational authorities in Ireland, the various schools of thought by whose co-operation alone, I believe, any solution of this question could be attained, were near agreement or could be made to come nearer to an agreement.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Who said that?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I thought the right hon. Gentleman had said that he made that charge against my right hon. friend. I now learn he does not make that charge, and I must say that, though I was not myself cognisant of the attempt, I see nothing to complain of in it. It was always understood by every member of the Government of which I am the head that this was not a question on which the Cabinet were agreed and that it could not be made until they were agreed, if ever, a Cabinet question. But the Cabinet never, as a whole, denied its extreme importance, and they appointed a Commission before I was Prime Minister, and a very strong Commission it was, to investigate the question. That Commission reported, I believe, not many months after my right hon. friend the Member for Dover became a member of the Cabinet. Would he have been justified in leaving the question there? [AN HON. MEMBER: Yes.] I think not. I think he was bound to see where public opinion was upon this question. What he would not have been justified in doing was going to this and that body and promising, in the name of the Government, that this or that should be done. He never did do that. It is surely absurd to say that a man holding the strong views my right hon. friend does on this question—which he has never concealed from the House, from hon. Gentlemen below the gangway, or anybody—and finding himself responsible for the Irish Government at the very moment that the Commission reported, should not do what he did to investigate for himself how far some scheme could be devised which would bring together the warring educational elements of the time. He failed, I know, and there may be many failures yet before this question is settled. I think, owing to circumstances not worth going into now, he was foredoomed to failure. I believe public opinion in this House and the country has gone back, according to my view of what is good and bad, upon this question, and that the House is more reluctant to deal with it now than it would have been four or five years ago.

I do not think it is worth while at this point taking up a charge levelled against me by the mover of the Resolution, who said that my treatment of the Irish University question was weak and cynical. The cynical I do not understand. Weak it might possibly be. What is his method of dealing with it? His method is to wrap up what, I am afraid, the majority of the House would regard as an evil measure, and a great many other things which I think evil measures, under the general name of Home Rule, and throw the responsibility upon hon. Gentlemen below the gangway. That is his plan. I do not know whether it is strong. I know it is cynical, and those who come forward and with a virtuous air say, "We will not do a single thing which can strengthen the Pope, the bishops, or the priests; we are resolutely determined to prevent a single shilling of public money being given to anything which can in the remotest degree have a flavour of anything of the kind about it," have nothing to say about Home Rule. "If the Home Rulers choose to do these things, and to do them without the restrictions this House would put upon them, well, that is their affair. What have we to do with that?" I am not a great master of epithet, but perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will permit me to borrow from his more ample vocabulary, and describe that procedure as both weak and cynical.

The hon. Member for Mayo talked a great deal about the middle Party. He asked what it was, and said it must be a Party to which Members are drawn both from the extreme left and extreme right hand.

MR. DILLON: I said a middle Party in Ireland must be drawn necessarily from opposing Parties already in existence.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No doubt the hon. Member put the matter much better than I hope to put it, but he seems to me to be saying much the same thing.

Mr. DILLON: Pardon me. The right hon. Gentleman said from the extreme left and right hand. What I meant was from the moderate men of each conflicting Party.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: We need not dispute over words, but with regard to this so-called middle Party, I do not understand it bears any resemblance to the fancy portrait the right hon. Gentleman has just drawn. If I rightly understand the views of my right hon. friend the Member for Dover, he felt, as everybody must, that whilst there is a strong body of organised opinion in the North of Ireland belonging to the loyalist section of the community, there is scattered over the rest of Ireland a great unorganised body of loyalist opinion, which might, if organised, do great service to the State. I think that is true. I quite agree that if the organisation is to terminate in the eccentricities of devolution, the less we have of it the better. I trust that will be but a passing phase amongst those leaders of the so-called Reform Party, and if they are to hope, as they may well hope, to take a useful and vigorous part in the public life of Ireland, I am quite certain it is only on condition that they absolutely abstain from meddling with those constitutional issues. I believe, and I have always believed, that to be the view of my right hon. friend the Member for Dover.

Now I have gone over the premises upon which the initial accusation was based, the accusation—namely, that with the advent of my right hon. friend to Cabinet office the new policy of conciliation and devolution was established. We are told that we had secretly—I forget which of our numerous accusers made the statement—that while publicly expressing the Unionist creed, while running Unionism for all it was worth as an electoral cry in England, we had secretly and tacitly abandoned that creed in Ireland, and were encouraging other persons to adopt doctrines and to further a policy which was totally remote from that policy to which we had given such vain and empty lip service on this side of St. George's Channel. I venture to say a more outrageous accusation, based on more flimsy evidence, never was laid before the House of Commons. I am not aware of the slightest foundation in any utterances made either by my right hon. friend or by myself—I need not say anything about the rest of the Cabinet because the whole object of every speaker to-night has been to isolate my right hon. friend and myself from the rest of the Cabinet, and to explain that we were running a policy of our own. If, therefore, I defend myself and my right hon. friend, that is, perhaps, enough for the House and enough for my accusers.

What possible justification is there for this accusation? The only justification beyond the utterly irrelevant charges, which I hope I have disposed of in what I have already said, is that the Under-Secretary did sincerely but most erroneously believe that the Chief Secretary knew what he was doing when the Under-Secretary aided Lord Dunraven in the preparation of his scheme, and I suppose the inference is that the Under-Secretary sincerely believed that if the Chief Secretary knew therefore I knew. That is the argument. Well, my right hon. friend did not know, and, if anybody requires conclusive proof, he gave conclusive proof that he did not know by saying, the moment that these statements of devolution appeared, what he had constantly said before, that with these devolution schemes he had no agreement, that with them he would have neither art nor part. He said it then; he said it this evening, in language which I think still lingers in the memory of every man who heard it, but he did not begin to say it on those two occasions. I do not know that the case can be put more vigorously than he put it himself, while Chief Secretary, two or three years ago, in a speech in the country, when he said, speaking of the Irish Members—

"They desire at least a Parliament for Ireland, with as high a *status* as our Parliament for Great Britain, but to the best of my knowledge and belief there is not one man, woman, or child in Ireland who desires the creation of that ambiguous monstrosity which Mr. Asquith, Sir Edward Grey, and others describe as a greater measure of devolution."

And if anybody will look at the speech my right hon. friend made in this House on the Address last year—I was not present on account of illness—they will see that the same fundamental thought underlies that speech as is in the extract I have just read, a thought with which I am in entire agreement. It is this, that Home Rule is as bad as anything can be, except, perhaps, devolution; Home Rule, at all events, is a logical and consistent system, which, however destructive of the United Kingdom, does at all events leave a machinery which may conceivably work in some fashion or another, while the scheme of devolution neither satisfies Irish aspirations nor British views of administration. It is a scheme intrinsically bad, and not only that, but a scheme which has no merits of any kind whatever; it does not satisfy what are called Nationalist aspirations, it certainly gives no satisfaction to my friends from Ulster below the gangway, and certainly no man sitting on this bench and responsible for the Government of Ireland would tolerate such a system for twenty-four hours.

I would venture to say to my hon. friends from Ulster who have spoken to-night that they hardly play, I think, a wholly worthy part in showing this extreme readiness of suspicion in dealing with those whose public career is before them, who belong to the same Party as themselves, who hold the same general views about the Constitution of the United Kingdom. Suspicion is the great weakener of causes, and if I were to base prophecies upon the lessons of history I should be almost disposed to remind my hon. friends that a cause in which suspicion is thus easily produced out of nothing is one predestined by its own act to failure. I hope for better things, and I believe better things, because I hope and believe that this unworthy cloud of suspicion is but a passing and unhappy phase, and that a confidence which has most assuredly been deserved on one side will not be withheld on the other. Certainly I, who have taken part now for twenty years in heated and stormy debates in this House over the Irish question, never suspected that I should live, never thought that I should live, to be told that unless I could prove myself innocent of Home Rule I must be adjudged to be guilty. If no length of service, if no whole-hearted devotion, if no strenuous endeavour under difficult circumstances is to free a public man in this country from this unworthy suspicion of those who call themselves his followers, then, indeed, Sir, I think the strength of public life is sapped.

I do not wish to dwell upon this personal aspect. I am, indeed, almost sorry that I have been betrayed into the few words I have uttered upon it. I will conclude by touching upon the only remaining part of the subject which, I think, deserves treatment, namely, the reality of the charge that we have initiated a new policy, and with a consideration of what the true policy is which the Unionist Party should pursue towards Ireland. I have been closely concerned with the government of Ireland, in one capacity or another, for almost twenty years; and during those twenty years I can truly say that I have had but one conception of what that treatment should be, and I have endeavoured, whether as directly responsible for the government of Ireland, or as a member of the Cabinet collectively responsible, or as a member of the Opposition who had such power as the Opposition may possess of guiding the legislation of his country, that ideal of mine has never changed. I will not say it was begun, but it was carried on by me during my tenure of the Chief Secretaryship. It was carried on by my right hon. friend the present President of the Local Government Board, and it has been carried on in direct succession by my right hon. friend the Member for Dover. We have been accused, and quite rightly accused, all of us, of being coercionists, if by coercionists is meant administrators who think that the first duty of a Government is to see that the law is obeyed and that private rights are respected. That is the basis of the whole. That is the fundamental principle upon which everything else must be built, and, if it is allowed to crumble, the towering structure, however ambitious, however beautiful in its imaginative outlines, will certainly fall into ruin also. We are coercionists in that sense, in the first place. We are, in the second place, Unionists, because we believe that not merely is the continuance of a united kingdom necessary for Imperial purposes, though that consideration by itself is sufficient to make us what we are, but because we believe that Ireland, without the powerful support of England and Scotland, is financially and industrially incapable of a healthy or successful national life. [An hon. Member on the IRISH Benches: Give it a chance.] And, in the third place, we believe most firmly that a united Parliament, which is the basis of the Union, is not incapable of carrying out great reforms, greater reforms, indeed, than could be carried out by an Irish Parliament [Cries of "Oh" from the IRISH Benches], because it has behind it a greater power, a greater machinery, for aiding their execution. And we have shown that this is no vain and empty theory of ours, but it has found expression in actual practice.

I am not going through a list of all the measures that have been passed during the three Chief Secretaryships which I have mentioned, but I would remind the House of the Congested Districts Board, which was established in 1887. I would remind the House of the great Local Government Bill of my right hon. friend sitting on this bench, passed in 1898, and I would remind them of the Land Bill recently passed by my right hon. friend the Member for Dover. However these measures may be undervalued now, they were great efforts of constructive legislation, involving infinite labour both in this House and out of this House, and I doubt whether any period of Irish history will show such a constructive record as I have ventured to describe. That is the Unionist policy as I conceive it, and that policy suffered no change, no variation, in this mystic year of 1902, or with the advent of a new Under-Secretary for Ireland. It does not depend upon Under-Secretaries. It depends upon Cabinets, it depends upon Parties, it depends upon the great Unionist organisation without which this and every other Unionist Government is absolutely powerless. But do not let us, in a moment of insane suspicion—a suspicion which gives no pleasure to any Gentleman except to the few laughers on that side of the House—do anything to weaken or diminish the lustre of the achievements which I think will long live in the history of the relations between England and Ireland, and which form a brilliant contrast to even the best meaning legislation which has preceded them. I am far from desiring to take the glory of them as the particular Minister who was responsible for carrying them into effect, but I may claim that from those achievements the whole Unionist Party—my hon. friends from Ulster as well as the great body of Unionists in this country on whom they depend, may derive legitimate satisfaction. At all events, of this I am sure: that if from a combination of groundless suspicion and unfortunate ill-health my right hon. friend the Member for Dover could not carry on the work which he had taken in hand, his name will at all events remain as the author and begetter of the Land Bill, as the man who got it through this House and passed it into law; and that memory will far outlive those suspicions, cruel and unjust at the moment, but as passing as the storm cloud vanishing before the sunshine. I hope this House will not assent to the Motion, which, though indeed it be directed to the production of the documents, was avowedly intended as an attack upon my right hon. friend and upon myself—an attack which I believe to be absolutely unjustifiable and absolutely without foundation.

*Mr. Asquith (Fifeshire, E.): It is no part of my business to enter into the domestic affairs of hon. Gentlemen opposite, and I am not in the least disposed to quarrel with the faithful and candid diagnosis by the Prime Minister of the morbid symptoms which he discerns in the Party of which he is the distinguished head. He tells us that at this moment it is honeycombed with insane suspicion. Not a very happy state of things for a Party which is approaching a general election long delayed, and seeking to defer that event. But, as my right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition said when he brought forward his Motion, his immediate object is not so much to pronounce censure as to obtain illumination. After listening carefully to the speech of the Prime Minister, I think the great bulk of the House will agree with me that not one single ray of light has been furnished on the only points to which this Motion is directed. Amid the fog of obscurity in which we still move, let me remind the Prime Minister and the House that there stand out clearly three plain, patent, and indisputable facts. What are they? First, that the late Chief Secretary has resigned. Next, that the Prime Minister has not resigned. Third, that Sir Antony MacDonnell retains his place in Dublin Castle. These are facts which are beyond the region of controversy; and yet they are as difficult, as impossible, I should say, now, as they were at the beginning of this debate, to reconcile as co-existing facts in our political system.

In this search after truth, what discoveries have we made in the course of the debate? Let me take the first question of all—a question to which neither the right hon. Member for Dover nor the Prime Minister has given any intelligible answer. Why did the right hon. Gentleman resign, and why did the Prime Minister accept his resignation? I have not the faintest idea. What cause was there for him to resign which did not logically and ethically—let me put the question in the most specific form—involve in a similar necessity the Prime Minister and all his colleagues in the Cabinet? What had the right hon. Member for Dover done of which they disapproved? Nothing. What had he left undone which they thought he ought not to have omitted? Nothing. What new fact had been disclosed which was not perfectly well known to them before? Nothing. It is idle to contend, as the Prime Minister contended, that he and his colleagues were not perfectly aware that for two and a-half years prior to the resignation of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, the Irish administration, largely through the agency of the masterful personality of Sir Antony MacDonnell, but mainly, I agree, through the efforts of the right hon. Member for Dover himself, had been conducted on lines which constituted an entirely new departure. The right hon. Gentleman asks, what is the evidence of that? He brushes aside the speech of Lord Dudley on entering office, when he spoke with all the authority of a man placed by the Prime Minister in a most important and responsible post, and speaking, as my right hon. friend reminds me, not only in his own name, but in the name of the Government, he declared, borrowing a phrase which used to be common on these benches, and in the truth and reality of which I believe, that in local affairs the policy of government should be in accordance with Irish ideas. Was that a new departure or not? The right hon. Gentleman brushes aside all this as if a declaration by the Viceroy in the name of the Government might be neglected as a thing to which nobody need pay any attention.

And then we come to the correspondence between Sir Antony MacDonnell and the right hon. Member for Dover. Was there ever such a correspondence between a Minister of the Crown and a subordinate entering the service of the State? We know that the whole of the proceedings were initiated by Lord Lansdowne; we have his own statement made in another place. He suggested to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover—I think I am representing him correctly—he suggested the appointment of Sir Antony MacDonnell to the post of Under-Secretary, at the same time pointing out that a man who had had a large and varied experience in great posts of administration could not be expected to take an office such as that, subject to the ordinary terms of appointment. From the first the basis of the arrangement between the Government and this distinugished servant of the Crown was understood; but the right hon. Gentleman has endeavoured to minimise the importance of the stipulations suggested by Sir Antony MacDonnell and cordially accepted, and much to his honour, by the right hon. Member for Dover; he left out one or two important facts. The maintenance of law and order, said the right hon. Gentleman, involves coercion, but he omitted to observe that Sir Antony MacDonnell had expressly refused to be a party to such a scheme of coercion as had been outlined by *The Times* newspaper, and the reference to "administrative conciliation" further negatives the idea that he ever had in contemplation coercion as one of the ordinary instruments of administration. The right hon. Gentleman twits the hon. Member for Shields upon not understanding what is meant by co-ordination; I am not sure that anybody does really understand it. But at least co-ordination does not mean to most people increased centralisation of the Irish bureaucracy. I think that both the right hon. Member for Dover and Sir Antony MacDonnell were rightly advised in the endeavour to do everything in their power to secure the assent of all sections to a University scheme that would command general approval of the people of Ireland. Yet the right hon. Gentleman tells us there was no new departure.

His Government has for two and a-half years enjoyed the full benefit of what I may call the Wyndham-MacDonnell *régime*, a most substantial asset in the meagre, dwindling figures in the credit column of the balance-sheet of their reputation. I am not aware how far it helped their progress at a very critical stage of the fortunes of the English Education Bill in the months of September and October, 1902. At any rate, by universal consent it was the conferences between Sir Antony MacDonnell, Lord Dunraven, and the leaders of the Nationalist Party that, if they did not open the way for the Land Act of 1903, at least smoothed its passage and secured its successful operation. We may say that on the whole law and order has been maintained in Ireland under a policy of conciliation with a degree of success rarely paralleled in the past. There were charges of laxity of administration made by Ulster representatives, but they were refuted successfully time after time by the late Chief Secretary, to the satisfaction of the House and of his colleagues. All these results were largely due to the presence of a new spirit, the adoption of new methods at Dublin Castle, where there was an Under-Secretary accessible to every one, and a frequent visitor to remote parts of the country, where he was not afraid to interchange views with all sorts and conditions of Irishmen—with Unionist landlords, with Lord Dunraven, with parish priests, and even with local agents of the League. This was a new thing in Unionist administration, and though it may have been very shocking to some Unionist consciences on the other side of the House it is, after all, the only way in which the work of administration can be carried out in a free country. The Government have had the full benefit of all that. And there is something more than that; for from those beginnings something in the nature of co-operation for public purposes between Irishmen of different camps and different schools, and, more extraordinary still, between governors and governed, was gradually emerging—the promise of that new era foreshadowed by Lord Dudley, in which the purely local affairs of Ireland would be largely governed by Irish ideas. It is the height of historical inaccuracy and of personal ingratitude for the right hon. Gentleman now to repudiate this new departure.

What brought about the crash? The Dunraven scheme of devolution was only, after all, the latest product of the series of conferences and exchanges of views so wisely initiated by Sir Antony MacDonnell between the various Parties in Ireland; but it gave the Ascendancy Party who had long been uneasy, and alarmed, and had felt that in this new departure the ground was slipping from under their feet, the pretext they wanted. Here, at last, they could discern, and persuade other people to discern, the cloven foot of Home Rule; and so throughout Ulster, as we saw last autumn, the tocsin was sounded. Cabinet Ministers and English lawyers lustily pulled the ropes with as much energy as the most fanatical Orangemen of Ulster. Simultaneously a campaign of panic and exaggeration was organised in the Press of this country. Then came what I suggest was the real explanation of these events. It was a simple case of intimidation. The Government took fright, and they ran away. They chose the cheapest and easiest, if not the most glorious, way out of the difficulty. While the Prime Minister and the Cabinet maintained their own seats on the sledge they threw the Chief Secretary to the wolves. So much is, I think, pretty clear. But when we try to find out what is the nature and the extent of the change in their policy we relapse into the region of darkness; for here comes in the third of the three facts I have mentioned—the retention of Sir Antony MacDonnell at Dublin Castle. There is one point on which all persons in Ireland, to whatever Party they belong, are agreed. Not a man in Ireland does not think that the person who comes out of these transactions with most credit is Sir Antony MacDonnell, who is censured, and not any member of the Government who has censured him. That public reprimand of Sir Antony MacDonnell on the floor of this House for what was described as an indefensible error will, I venture to think, take high rank even among the achievements of this Government, as an act which was at the same time morally unjust and politically fatuous. It was morally unjust; for to attach a different meaning to the word co-ordination than that which it conveyed to the Chief Secretary and to the Prime Minister was Sir Antony MacDonnell's only offence; and it was politically fatuous because publicly to rebuke a high official and yet to retain him in a post of responsibility and of difficulty is to do all you can to undermine his authority and influence.

I must add that it is impossible, for me at any rate, not to feel in this case a certain amount of sympathy with the hon. Gentlemen from Ulster below the gangway. It is the one bitter drop in what otherwise would be an unmixed cup of triumph. They have got, or they think they have got, a Chief Secretary after their own heart in the person of the right hon. Gentleman whom I see opposite—a man who, they fondly think, will listen only to the right sort of people and will not stand any nonsense. But for all that, the new Chief Secretary, as they know, if Sir Antony MacDonnell is to be retained, is going to be subjected to a severe and most unnecessary test. Dublin Castle, so long as the present Under-Secretary is there, is an infected area; and they cannot, I gather from their speeches, dismiss from their bosoms a lurking fear that even this blameless English Tory—an English Tory, if the right hon. Gentleman will allow me to say so without offence, of a singularly primitive and uncomplicated type—a man whose demeanour, whose vocabulary goes straight to the heart of every loyalist in Ireland — they are not without their fears of what may happen if even this welcome, long-waited-for, and most promising figure has got to be exposed day by day to the dangerous contiguity of Sir Antony MacDonnell. *Corruptio optimi pessima.* I sympathise with hon. Gentlemen opposite; but looking at it from a totally different point of view, we on this side of the House feel that so long as Sir Antony MacDonnell is at Dublin Castle there is a substantial safeguard that the Irish Government will not, at any rate, be driven back into the more extreme forms of coercion and reaction.

The Prime Minister has not told us—he has left a good many things untold—which of the points set out in the correspondence between the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover and Sir Antony MacDonnell, assented to when the right hon. Member for Dover was Chief Secretary, and approved, as we know, at the time by Lord Lansdowne and the Prime Minister—which of these points are to be abandoned and which are to be retained. I am afraid the right hon. Gentleman the new Chief Secretary is only going to take his place in that long procession of, to use Lord Beaconsfield's phrase, "transient and embarrassed phantoms" who have tried to govern Ireland without any reliance upon or any contact with Irish opinion and Irish sentiment. The right hon. Gentleman told us in his peroration of the great constructive work that the Unionist Party had accomplished in Ireland, in the Congested Districts Board, the Local Government Bill, and the Land Bill. I will not speak of the Congested Districts Board; but the last two measures are the embodiment of principles violently and vehemently attacked by the Unionist Party at its very beginning. Who can forget Lord Salisbury's Newport speech, in which he declared that the very thing done under the auspices of a Tory Government, the creation of local authorities in Ireland, was infinitely more dangerous for the unity of the Empire than even the establishment of a central Parliament in Ireland? Who can forget the political capital made against the Home Rule Bill out of Mr. Gladstone's Land Bill of 1886? These great achievements of Unionist policy, after all, are borrowed from other quarters. I think it is a tribute which all on this side owe to say that the rule of the late Chief Secretary, with Sir Antony MacDonnell as his subordinate, will be a landmark in Irish administration. You may, I hope you will not, refurbish the old weapon of coercion; you may perorate about law and order—I see that the right hon. Gentleman has already begun to perorate—but history will recall that during the last three years Ireland has, under your auspices—under your unwilling guidance, perhaps, and, as I believe, under your unconscious guidance, but through the instrumentality of the late Chief Secretary and Sir Antony MacDonnell—Ireland has taken steps which can never be retraced on the road, and the only road, which leads to contentment and to loyalty.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 252; Noes, 315. (Division List No. 152.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert H.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Benn, John Williams
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brand, Hon. Arthur G.
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Broadhurst, Henry
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles R. (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Dobbie, Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, Capt E C (S. Andrw's Bghs
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Sir Francis H. (Maidstone
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.)
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Grant, Corrie
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir E. (Berwick)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harrington, Timothy
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobhouse, C.E.H. (Bristol, E.
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, D. B. (Swansea)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W.)
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David

Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Fadden, Edward
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh,N.)
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley,Rt.Hn.John(Montrose
Moss, Samuel
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien,Kendal(TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary,N.)
O'Connor,James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly,James(Roscommon,N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James

O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Parrott, William
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Perks, Robert William
Philipps, John Wynford
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Reckitt, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Reid,SirR.Threshie(Dumfries
Richards,Thomas(W.Monm'th)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts,John H. (Denbighs.)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel,HerbertL.(Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, Charles E.
Seely,Maj.J.E.B.(IsleofWight
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer,Rt.Hn.C.R.(Northants
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James

Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A.(Glamorgan,E.)
Thomas,DavidAlfred(Merthyr)
Thomas,JA(Glamorgan,Gower
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Tillett, Louis John
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Tully, Jasper
Ure, Alexander
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason,JohnCathcart(Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whiteley, George (York,W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wills,ArthurWalters(N.Dorset
Wilson,Fred.W.(Norfolk,Mid.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York.W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh.N.)
Woodhouse,SirJT.(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Herbert Gladstone and Mr. William M'Arthur.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen,AugustusHenryEden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster,Rt.Hn.HughO.
Arrol,Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hon.SirH.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon.A.J.(Manch'r
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour,RtHnGeraldW.(Leeds
Balfour,Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach,Rt Hon.SirMichaelHicks
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.

Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Bond, Edward
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles,Lt.-Col.H.F.(Middlesex
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brown, Sir Alex.H.(Shropsh.)
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell,J.H.M.(Dublin Univ.
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C.W.(Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain,Rt.Hon.J.(Birm.
Chamberlain,RtHn.J.A.(Worc.
Chamberlayne, T. (S'thampton
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham

Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colomb,Rt.Hon.SirJohnC.R.
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Davies, Sir H. D. (Chatham)
Denny, Colonel
Dewar,SirT.R.(TowerHamlets
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale,Rt.Hon.SirJosephC.
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dixon-Hartland,SirFredDixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore

Duke, Henry Edward
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Rt Hn. Ailwyn Edward
Ferguson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs)
Firbank, Sir Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S.W.
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, Maj Evans-(T'r H'mlets
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury
Greene, Sir E W (B'ry S Edm'nds
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hain, Edward
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G. (Midd'x
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R. (Dulwich)
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur H. (Hanley)
Heath, Sir James (Staffords. N W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, Rt Hn H. (Somers't, E
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Horner, Frederick William
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham)
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Kimber, Sir Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monm'th)
Lawson, Hn. H. L. W. (Mile End)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. N.R
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareham
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S)
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh, W)
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Marks, Harry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H E (Wigt'n
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriessh're
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, John Thorgmorton
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milner, Rt. Hon. Sir Frederick G.
Milvain, Thomas
Mitchell, William (Burnley)
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Peel, Hn. Wm. R. Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederick Carne
Ratcliffe, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robinson, Brooke
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir Harry S. (Limehouse
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, Sir H. (Renfrew)
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, H. C (North'mb. Tyneside
Smith, Rt Hn J. Parker (Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Rt Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E H (Sheffield
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby-Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.)
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd

Whiteley,H.(Ashton und.Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson,A.Stanley(York,E.R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd,SirW.H.(Yorks.)
Wodehouse,Rt.Hn.E.R.(Bath)
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley,Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

POST OFFICE (TELEPHONE AGREEMENT).

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton) said he was not going to raise the subject that night. Opposition was raised on the last occasion, and he had met the objections by putting in the names asked for They would appear in the amended Paper to-morrow, when he hoped the Motion would be passed.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil) said his opposition and that of his associates had been withdrawn, and they would be very pleased to see the Motion passed as early as possible.

CHARTERED SOCIETIES BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*SIR JOHN ROLLESTON (Leicester) said the Bill only contained one clause, and was designed to protect societies who had the right to use distinctive initials conferred upon them by Royal Charter from the fraudulent use of those characters by those not entitled to use them, and by means of which the public might be deceived. This Bill was promoted at the desire of various chartered societies in England and Scotland comprising some 20,000 members, and the collective opinion of those societies was that it was as much in the interests of the public as their own. He was aware that the Bill was opposed by societies incorporated but not chartered, who thought that it would confer a monopoly. He assured the House that was not the case, and if the Bill were passed and referred to a Standing Committee the interests of the incorporated societies could be there considered and possibly an arrangement made. He hoped the House would pass the Bill.

MR. HARWOOD (Bolton) opposed the Second Reading because it was apparently a Bill simply to give a patent right to a term to those accountants who belonged to the Society of Chartered Accountants, but all knew that the term "chartered accountant" had come to have a special meaning, and implied that the holder had certain qualifications. As a matter of fact there was another society of accountants with about 2,000 members who could not use the term if the Bill passed, and to whom this Bill would prove an injustice. Before any such change was made some term ought to be found to cover all accountants valued by the public. Let the Society of Chartered Accountants come to a reasonable arrangement. Instead of that they were trying to get for themselves a patent right to a particular term, although they knew it carried with it a signification much larger than was really involved in the word.

And, it being Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Wednesday, 7th June.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said he understood the right hon. Gentleman the Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury was rather annoyed the previous evening because he was asked an important Question without proper notice. He therefore desired to repeat the Question he put on that occasion, as he understood the right hon. Gentleman was in a position to give the information, namely, whether there was not at the present moment a vacancy in the post of Junior Lord of the Treasury, and whether he would give the House any explanation as to the extraordinary delay that had taken place in filling the vacancy.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Sir A ACLAND-HOOD, Somersetshire, Wellington) said he understood there was a vacancy and he could assure the hon. Gentleman that steps would be taken to fill it.

MR. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.) suggested that the right Answer to the Question was that the post would not be filled until the Government decided whether or not they could avoid a dissolution. By June 2nd the Government had strong hopes that the opposition raised by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham would come to a head or would be withdrawn. Not until they were satisfied that they could carry on the Government after that date would they attempt to fill the vacant post of Junior Lord of the Treasury. It was hardly reasonable to expect the Government to fill the post now, because they would have to call upon one of their hon. friends to spend £1,000 or £1,500 to contest a by-election with every probability of losing the seat.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said there was another point in the matter. They had been without a Junior Lord of the Treasury for two months, but they had managed to get on without him, and the country had been saving all that time at the rate of £1,000 per annum. Was there any use in continuing the appointment? He was informed that when a gentleman was appointed Junior Lord of the Treasury he appeared once at the Treasury; he went there at the commencement and an official went in and said, "Will your Lordship allow your secretary to enter your room?" This done, the official said, "Will your Lordship allow your secretary to take a seat?" The secretary then took a seat at the table, and cleared out the Junior Lord, and he never went there again. This seemed to him to be a waste of £1,000 a year. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman thought the result of the Brighton election was an evil, but still good would come out of evil if this Ministry, which had wasted so much money, were to make a death-bed repentance and do away with the office of Junior Lord of the Treasury.

Question put, and agreed to.

NEW BILL.

METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCILS ASSOCIATION.

Bill to remove doubts as to the legality of the payment of certain expenses by Councils of Metropolitan Boroughs, ordered to be brought in by Captain Jessel, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. W. F. D. Smith, Mr. Hayes Fisher, Dr. Macnamara, Mr. Buxton, Mr. Remnant, and Mr. Crooks.

METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCILS ASSOCIATION BILL.

"To remove doubts as to the legality of the payment of certain expenses by Councils of Metropolitan Boroughs," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 208.]

Adjourned at nine minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 10th May, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. SPEAKER owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 10) Bill. "To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Abergavenny, Atherton, Keighley, Richmond (Surrey), and Whiston (Rural)," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 209.]

PETITIONS.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Brims; Edinburgh (two); Glasgow (five); North Walls; Paisley (three); Partick; Springburn; Whiteinch; and Zetland; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS (SUNDAY) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Birmingham; and Probus; to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Kirkintilloch; Oxford and Sheffield; Stockport; and West Renfrewshire; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877 (OXFORD).

Copy presented, of Statute made by the Governing Body of St. John's College, Oxford, on 20th January, 1905, amending Statutes III. and XVI. of the Statutes of the College [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 157.]

NATIONAL DEBT.

Copy presented, of Return showing (1) the Aggregate Gross Liabilities of the State as represented by the Nominal Funded Debt, Estimated Capital Liability in respect of Terminable Annuities, Unfunded Debt, and other Liabilities in respect of Debt, the Estimated Assets, and the Exchequer balances at the close of each financial year from 1835–6 to 1904–5, both inclusive; and (2) the Gross and Net Expenditure charged annually during that period against the Public Revenue on account of the National Debt, and other Payments connected with Capital Liabilities (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper [C. 2065] of Session 1904) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION ACTS, 1859 AND 1876

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 4th May, 1905, declaring Yunnan-fu and Tengyueh to be unhealthy places within the meaning of The Superannuation Act, 1876 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

RAILWAY RETURNS (PRELIMINARY STATEMENT).

Copy presented, of Return relating to the Railways of the United Kingdom for the year 1904 (Preliminary Statement) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY.

Copy presented, of Return of Stores and Supplies despatched to South Africa during the period 1899–1901 destroyed locally [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3367 and 3368 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Postage on Parcels addressed in Irish.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will explain why parcels addressed in Irish are surcharged to letter post rate by a recent rule of the Post Office; and whether private instructions are issued to Post Office authorities directing that such surcharges be made and that the parcels be delayed as much as possible.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) There is no rule such as that which the hon. Member describes, nor have any such instructions been issued.

Moyvore Postmastership.

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that on the recommendation of Lieutenant-Colonel Digby, Ballinacuna, Moyvore, county Westmeath, a police constable named O'Hara was appointed to the charge of the Moyvore Post Office; whether he is aware that on the death some five months ago of Mr. S. Forbes, the then postmaster of Moyvore, his widow and one of his daughters took charge of the Moyvore Post Office and gave satisfaction; and whether, in view of the fact that there has been no complaint against the management of the post office by these people, he will explain why they should be disturbed, and also if it is usual for police officers to hold such appointments.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The hon. Member is mistaken in thinking that Mr. O'Hara was recommended to me by Colonel Digby. On the occurrence of the vacancy, the claims of Mrs. Forbes and of all the candidates were considered, and the conclusion was come to that Mr. O'Hara was the best suited for the appointment, and he was appointed on the condition that he should retire from the Royal Irish Constabulary.

The Engrossing Staff of the Sasine Office, Edinburgh.

MR. JAMES HOPE (Fife, W.): To ask the Lord-Advocate if he is aware that a member of the engrossing staff in the Sasine Office, Edinburgh, has, at the age of seventy-five, after thirty-three years service, become incapacitated for work, and now is dependent for support on a small weekly allowance from a benefit society composed of members of that staff; and whether, in view of this state of matters in a branch of Government employment, will the Government be prepared to consider the adoption of means whereby the engrossing staff may be put on a footing more in accord with the rules of employment recognised in public service.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) The member of the Sasine Office staff to whom the hon. Member presumably refers is eligible on retirement for a gratuity in terms of a Minute issued by the Secretary for Scotland after consultation with the Treasury on 14th September, 1893, when the position of the engrossing staff was fully considered. I may add that the gentleman in question has, through not being a member of the establishment of the Civil Service, had the advantage of continuance of service at the full rate of pay he was competent to earn for ten years beyond the age of sixty-five, which is the ordinary age limit. His application for a gratuity has just been received.

Defective Water Supply in Island of Lewis Public Schools.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Lord-Advocate if he will state the number of public schools in the Island of Lewis for which the water supply is defective.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) I am informed that there are twenty-two schools in the Lewis in which the water supply is defective.

Unemployed Workmen.

MR. WHITMORE (Chelsea): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the promised Report of the Central Mansion House Committee on the Unemployed, and the Return, Unemployed Relief Expenditure (London), will be made public before the Second Reading of the Workmen's Employment Bill.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) I regret that I am not in a position to give my hon. friend the information for which he asks.

Worsthorne Council School, Lancashire.

Mr. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether he is aware that a Board, now a council, school has existed in Worsthorne, Lancashire, for many years, and is still a recognised working and necessary school under the Education Acts, and that an attempt is being made to bring about the closing of the council school and to leave the inhabitants no school for their children to attend but a Church of England school; and, if so, whether the Board of Education will make inquiry into the matter and enter into communication with the Lancashire education authority, with the view of preventing the closing of a school which is required in order to afford a choice of schools to the inhabitants of Worsthorne.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) The Worsthorne Council School is still open, and cannot be closed without the consent of the Board under Section 18 of the Elementary Education Act of 1870. No application for such consent has yet been received from the Lancashire local education authority, and until it is there appears to be no ground for the intervention of the Board.

Meeting of the Postal Union—Reduction of Postage to the Continent.

Sir THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): To ask the Postmaster-General if he will state when and where the next meeting of the Postal Union will take place; and whether efforts will be made to secure a reduction in the rate of postage from this country to the Continent.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The Postal Union Congress which was to have met at Rome this spring, has been deferred, and I am not yet aware when it will meet. The rates of postage for correspondence passing between countries of the union generally will be fully discussed; but I cannot at present pledge myself as to the attitude which the British delegates will be instructed to take.

Postal Rates for Printed Matter to Canada.

Sir THOMAS DEWAR: To ask the Postmaster-General whether, with a view to facilitate the circulation of newspapers and periodicals to Canada, he can arrange for reduced postal rates from this country, especially taking into consideration the facilities afforded by the United States for the transmission of printed matter to Canada and the fact that the postal rates from Canada to the United Kingdom are less than the British rates to Canada.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The reasons for not taking the course suggested by the hon. Member were fully explained by me to a deputation recently, and I shall be pleased to furnish the hon. Member with a report of the remarks I then made.

Postage on Assessment Notices.

Mr. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he contemplates issuing an order to raise the stamp on assessment notices from a halfpenny to a penny; and whether, before doing so, he will consider the expense which this will entail on local authorities.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) Before the 1st of January, 1904, local authorities had the privilege of sending notices by halfpenny post under certain conditions, and probably the assessment notices to which the hon. Member refers were so sent. As, however, I informed the hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty yesterday,† under the present regulations which came into force on the date mentioned, the only public officers who are entitled to send notices (other than those which come within the postal definition of a "circular") by the halfpenny post are officers of a Court of justice.

Split Duties in the Central Telegraph Office, London.

Sir ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the fact that the Tweedmouth Committee stated that split duties weighed very heavily upon the postal staff, and that every effort should be made to abolish them by a readjustment and redistribution of duties, he will state whether he is considering proposals for the constitution of these duties in the Central Telegraph Office, London; and, if so, whether he will refuse to sanction the suggestions.

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† See page 1330.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The view of the Tweedmouth Committee was that at the chief offices in London split duties might weigh very heavily on the staff and should be abolished as far as possible. Effect has been given to this view, and I have no intention of establishing such duties in the Central Telegraph Office. At the same time the Committee recognised that the conditions were different in the provinces (except at some of the larger towns), and they contemplated the continuance of split duties at offices where the pressure would be less severe.

Treasury Regulations for the Annual Drawings of the new Exchequer Bonds.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer will he issue as a Parliamentary Paper, or place copies in the Vote Office, of the Treasury regulations for the annual drawings of the new Exchequer bonds; and will the first million so drawn be paid off on 18th April, 1906.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The regulations contemplated by the Finance Bill will be drawn when the Bill has passed. They will be made public in the ordinary course as statutory rules, and copies can be made available for the House. As announced in the prospectus of the loan, the first million of the Exchequer bonds will be paid off on the 18th April, 1906.

Ballyshannon Union Nurses.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many nuns are acting as paid nurses in the Ballyshannon Union, county Donegal; is he aware that one of the nuns who was in charge left off duty on 14th February last and has not returned since; and, if so, will he say if she has sent in her resignation, and, if so, on what date; who is the nurse in charge at present; and on what date was she appointed.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Three nuns are employed as paid nurses in the infirmary of the Ballyshannon workhouse. The Local Government Board have no information to show that one of these nuns has vacated her position, either temporarily or permanently. The fever hospital nurse obtained a week's leave of absence at the date mentioned, but she is not a nun.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Military Expenditure in South Africa.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War can he now state the total of the military expenditure in South Africa for 1904–5, and its estimated amount for 1905–6, corresponding to the total of that expenditure of £7,760,653, shown to have been incurred in 1903–4; and can he state approximately the additional military expenditure incurred in 1903–4, 1904–5, and 1905–6, estimated respectively in respect of headquarter administrative expenses, deferred pay, and recruiting expenses, non-effective charges, and expenditure under the Military Works Acts.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT, Cheshire, Macclesfield): The estimated figures for 1904–5 and 1905–6, corresponding to the figure of £7,760,653 for 1903–4 are £2,900,000 and £2,400,000 respectively, exclusive of the value of stores for which figures are not yet available. The figures for expenditure under the Military Works Acts are, so far as they are available, in 1903–4 £1,424,000 and 1904–5 £1,191,000, as given in the reply to the Question† recently put by the hon. Member. It would hardly be possible to estimate how much of the expenditure on headquarter administration and on the other items mentioned can be attributed to South Africa, and I could not undertake to give any approximate figures.

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† See page 819.

Sandhurst Cadets.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can say whether complaints have been made to the War Office in regard to drunkenness among the Sandhurst cadets; and, if so, how many cadets were unfit for duty during the past six months from that cause.

*MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: In reply to a previous Question†, I informed my hon. friend that matters of this sort are dealt with by the Commandant, with whose discretion I am not prepared to interfere.

Primary Education in India.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will state what is the total increase in the number of schools and the number of school-going children resulting from the grant for primary education of last year; and whether the same system of distribution will be followed with regard to the 25 lakhs of rupees provided for the same purpose in the present Budget.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The educational statistics for the year 1904–5 have not yet been received, and in their absence it is not possible to give the figures asked for in the first paragraph of the Question. The special grant to provincial funds for primary education in the Budget for 1905–6 is 35, not 25, lakhs of rupees, and it has been distributed between the several provinces as follows:—Bengal, 10 lakhs; Madras, 6; Bombay, 5; United Provinces, 6; Punjab, 3; Burma, 2; Central Provinces and Berar, 2; Assam, 1; total, 35 lakhs.

Revised German Tariff.

COLONEL SADLER (Middlesbrough): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether his attention has been drawn to the new revised German tariff, and particularly to the complete change in the classification of iron and iron alloys and wares, which increases the duties on manufactured articles according to the amount of labour expended on them; and, if so, whether, in view of its effect on the British iron and steel industry, he will say what action he proposes to take.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BONAR LAW, Glasgow, Blackfriars): Representations with regard to the effect on British trade of the new German tariff, including the duties on iron and steel manufactures thereof, have already been addressed to the German Government on the lines of the Report of the Commercial Intelligence Committee (Appendix D. to Cd. 2044 of 1904). I fear that no useful purpose would be served by further representations at the present stage.

Terms of Treaty with the Mullah.

MR. LYELL (Dorsetshire, E.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is now in a position to inform the House of the terms of the treaty recently concluded with the Mullah.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl PERCY, Kensington, S.): The provisional agreement signed at Berbera was, in substance, of the same character as that concluded by Monsieur Pestalozza, the provisions of which were announced by Signor Tittoni in the Chamber of Deputies, and correctly reported in *The Times* of April 15th. In so far as that treaty concerns this country, there are a few small points which still require elucidation and with regard to which we are in communication with the Italian Government.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cornwall, Camborne): Can the noble Lord state where the Mullah now is?

EARL PERCY: He is in Italian territory.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES asked when the House might expect to have copies of the agreement.

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† See page 818.

Earl PERCY: The agreement will be laid on the Table as soon as the explanations are received from the Italian Government.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Then has not the treaty been concluded in consequence of the lack of explanations?

Earl PERCY: The provisional treaty has been concluded.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Can we have that?

Earl PERCY: There can be no object in laying the provisional agreement. It is merely the Italian agreement in a short form.

Scottish Church Dispute.

Mr. WALLACE (Perth): I beg to ask the Lord-Advocate whether he is aware that interdict has been applied for in regard to the West United Free Church, Perth, where, out of a membership of over 700, only three have joined the legal Free Church; and whether he will take steps to accelerate the introduction of the promised Scottish Churches Bill.

The LORD-ADVOCATE (Mr. Scott Dickson, Glasgow, Bridgton): I am aware that interdict has been applied for in the case of the church mentioned. I have no accurate knowledge as to the number of members of this congregation belonging to the United Free Church or the Free Church. I hope there will be no delay with regard to the promised Bill.

Irish Teachers' Pension Fund.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will appoint a small Committee to inquire into the Irish Teachers' Pension Fund, the adequacy of the present capital and Government contribution, the necessity or otherwise of increasing the pensions given, and of altering the conditions required for getting pension.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY of the TREASURY (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.): I cannot see any sufficient reason for appointing a Committee until the results of the quinquennial valuation, which is to be held at the close of this year, are known.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: But could not a small Committee get the facts together? It is a most difficult subject.

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH: I will consider that.

Moyvore Postmastership.

Mr. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that on the recommendation of Lieutenant-Colonel Digby, Ballinacuna, Moyvore, county Westmeath, a police constable named O'Hara was appointed to the charge of the Moyvore Post Office; whether he is aware that on the death some five months ago of Mr. S. Forbes, the then postmaster of Moyvore, his widow and one of his daughters took charge of the Moyvore Post Office and gave satisfaction; and whether, in view of the fact that there has been no complaint against the management of the post office by these people, he will explain why they should be disturbed, and also if it is usual for police officers to hold such appointments.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton): The hon. Member is mistaken in thinking that Mr. O'Hara was recommended to me by Colonel Digby. On the occurrence of the vacancy, the claims of Mrs. Forbes and of all the candidates were considered, and the conclusion was come to that Mr. O'Hara was the best suited for the appointment, and he was appointed on the condition that he should retire from the Royal Irish Constabulary.

Postage on Parcels addressed in Irish.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he will explain why parcels addressed in Irish are surcharged to letter post rate by a recent rule of the Post Office; and whether private instructions are issued to Post Office authorities directing that such surcharges be made and that the parcels be delayed as much as possible.

LORD STANLEY: There is no rule such as that which the hon. Member describes, nor have any such instructions been issued.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: If I send the noble Lord definite facts will he take some steps to see that the Post Office officials do not repeat this conduct?

LORD STANLEY: I am glad to hear from the hon. Member, but I may tell him beforehand I know perfectly well the case he will bring forward.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: And I know beforehand that the Answer the noble Lord will give will not be correct.

Irish National Schools.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether Rule 127 (b) of the National Commissioners has been withdrawn or modified; and, if modified, what is the present form of the rule.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): I beg to refer to my reply to the Question of the hon. Member for Kilkenny, put on Thursday last†.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: Can the right hon. Gentleman give me the purport of that Answer?

MR. WALTER LONG: That at the last meeting of the National Board of Education certain modifications were unanimously agreed to and that they had been forwarded to the Treasury.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): What is the objection to making them public now?

MR. WALTER LONG: I cannot say. I was under the impression that the modifications were generally approved.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): Have the Treasury signified their approval?

MR. WALTER LONG: I have not had the answer yet.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) said that this was a matter of great importance to the people of Ireland. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would see that the modifications were made public before they were approved by the Treasury. Why should there be secrecy or any hugger-mugger about the work of the National Board?

MR. WALTER LONG said he was not aware, personally, of any reason; he was not responsible for the proceedings of the National Board, but would make inquiry.

Irish Labourers' Cottages—Single Men's Claims.

MR. HAYDEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the resolution passed by the Delvin Rural District Council, on April 21st last, in reference to observations made by the Local Government inspector, at a recent inquiry under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts, to the effect that the Local Government Board would not sanction the building of houses for single men except under very special circumstances; if he is aware that a number of the applicants at the inquiry were unmarried men between twenty-one and thirty-five years of age, who mostly lived in overcrowded houses and were anxious to get cottages before getting married; and will he say if it is the rule or practice of the Local Government Board to refuse to sanction cottages for single men, and if he can state what statute sanctions such rule or practice.

MR. WALTER LONG: The resolution has not been received. The fact that an applicant for a labourer's cottage is unmarried is not a bar to the grant of a cottage if it be shown that other members of his family are living with, and dependent upon, him and that the house occupied by the family has been condemned as unfit for human habitation. Under the Labourers Act, local authorities are not bound to provide cottages for people about to marry.

MR. HAYDEN: But have the Local Government Board given instructions to its inspectors, when holding inquiries, to reject the claims of unmarried men?

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† See page 929.

Mr. WALTER LONG: I must have notice of that.

Mr. HAYDEN: It is the very Question on the Paper.

Goff Estate, County Roscommon.

Mr. HAYDEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland why a letter addressed to the Estates Commissioners last October by Michael Gilleran, Maggie Gilleran, Patrick Gilleran, Patrick Kelly, Thomas Burke, Patrick Moran, and Michael Nolan, relative to an agreement entered into with them by Mr. Holmes, agent of the Goff Estate, Kennity, county Roscommon, when the above-named tenants arranged to buy under the Land Purchase Act, 1903, has not been answered; and whether the Commissioners will proceed at once to investigate the claims of the tenants for the carrying out of the agreement on which they purchased, namely, that Mr. Holmes should have fourteen acres of their land, which they state is often covered with water for nine months in the year, drained, so as to make their land of use to them; and will he say whether the land was ever inspected.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The lands in question have been inspected and reported on, but the letter referred to was not received until after the inspection had been made, and the matter, therefore, is not referred to in the report. The facts as to the alleged agreement will be inquired into before the advances are made.

Trinity College Leases.

Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the subject of Trinity College leases; and, if so, whether he can state the nature of their recommendations and how far it is intended to act upon them.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Report has been recently received, and is at present under consideration. I cannot conveniently, within the limits of a reply to a Question, state the nature of the recommendations in the Report, and would ask my hon. friend to await its presentation to Parliament.

Clonakilty Agricultural Station.

Mr. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the Agricultural Department have recently acquired land at Clonakilty, in the county of Cork, for an agricultural institution; if they have placed the contract for iron and other buildings with Messrs. Speir, of Glasgow; if so, how much land has been acquired, at what price, what is the amount of Messrs. Speirs' contract, and why was the same not given to an Irish firm; and when the Department intend to make provision for corresponding educational facilities in Armagh, Down, Antrim, or Londonderry.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Department have not purchased any land at Clonakilty, but a farm of 347 acres has been placed at their disposal for the purposes of an agricultural station. A contract for iron buildings, amounting to £1,859, has been placed with the firm mentioned, whose offer the Department considered the best; and a contract for the remainder of the work, amounting to £483, has been given to a local contractor. The Department are not aware that there is any Irish firm which makes a speciality of the construction of iron buildings. Provision for agricultural instruction is being made at Ballyhaise, county Cavan, but the Department are at present unable to state when like provision will be made for the other Ulster counties named. The matter, however, is engaging their attention, and they look forward to increasing in due time the number of these stations.

House of Commons—Members' Writing Room.

Colonel WELBY (Taunton): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that the growing practice of Members turning down chairs to reserve places at the writing tables, while not using them at all or only at long intervals, is causing much inconvenience in the limited accommodation of the Libraries of the House; and whether he can see his way to recommending the appointment, discontinued since 1857, of a Library Committee to make rules like as the Kitchen Committee does for the dining-rooms.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.) replied that this was not a matter within his Department, but if the hon. Member would wait till the return of Mr. Speaker, who was unfortunately absent from ill health, he would consult as to what could be done.

Importation of Alien-made Goods.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is the policy of the Government to take steps for the exclusion from this country of alien-made goods, as well as of alien persons.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The policy of this country is not to exclude aliens, but to exclude undesirable aliens; and we do, as a matter of fact, exclude undesirable goods.

MR. BLACK: Then is the Government in favour of free imports?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Not of undesirable goods.

The Aliens Bill.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the protective character of the Aliens Bill, and to his pledge that nothing should be done to advance the policy of protection during the present Parliament, he intends to proceed with the further stages of the Bill.

MR. CHARLES McARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): Before the Question is answered, I desire to call the attention of the First Lord of the Treasury to its terms, and to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether there is any ground for the statement that the Aliens Bill has been declared to be of a protective character, and whether such a declaration has been made by the Government or by any person authorised to speak on behalf of the Government.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know whether it will be necessary to answer the Question of my hon. friend behind me. It is sufficient to say I do not consider that the exclusion of lunatics and other undesirable aliens is a branch of the fiscal question.

MR. LOUGH: Does not the right hon. Gentleman think the Member for West Birmingham is authorised to declare what the nature of his own policy is, and has he noticed the declaration of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, who is a member of the Cabinet, that the Aliens Bill will put an end to a condition of things which displaces British labour.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The reasons why I desire to proceed with the measure were fully stated by me on the Second Reading. I do not think it is necessary for me in an Answer across the floor of the House to add anything to that statement.

MR. LOUGH: But is the right hon. Gentleman not responsible for the declaration of a member of his own Cabinet?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the hon. Member will put that down on the Paper I will answer it to-morrow.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Is the right hon. Gentleman responsible for anything?

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.

Second Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

AGRICULTURAL RATES ACT, 1896, ETC. CONTINUANCE BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.), in the Chair.]

Clause 1:—

MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland) said he wished to move an

Amendment to except from the operation of the Bill one of the Acts referred to in it, namely, the Tithe Rent-Charge Rates Act, 1899. This was a Bill of an entirely different character to the Agricultural Rating Act. It concerned a different part of the community to the farmers and the agricultural interest. It referred to the tithe rent-charge which was paid to the clergy of the Church of England. It was relief given to the clergy of the Church of England, at the expense of the general ratepayer, by the remission of a large part of the rates upon their tithes. When the Bill was introduced it was opposed from his side of the House as vigorously—and with additional reason—as was the Agricultural Rates Act. It was alleged in support of the Bill by the Government that the clergy of the Church of England were, in many parts and in the rural districts especially, very poor, and that they deserved consideration at the hands of the country, that their rates were rising on the tithe rent-charge and that out of consideration for them a large part of those rates ought to be remitted. The measure was opposed on the ground that the Church of England was the richest Church in the world, that it was a Church which from the private subscriptions of its supporters ought to have been able to make good any deficiencies which might occur owing to the larger charges on the rent-charges resulting from the rise of rates. They pointed out that the original tithes, of which the commuted tithe rent-charge was the direct successor, were, in the first instance, given very largely to the poor, but that as time went on they became devoted more exclusively to the Church, and it was urged that in view of that fact, and in view also of the fact that at the time of the passing of the Tithes Commutation Act the question of the amount of rates paid on the tithe was taken into consideration, and the amount was decided in view of those facts—it was urged that the clergy ought to have been content to go on paying charges which had been borne up to that time by the tithe they were drawing.

As a matter of fact, when the Tithe Commutation Act was passed and when the arrangement was made which fixed the amount of the tithe, the rates throughout the rural districts were actually higher on the average than they now were. The rates at that time averaged 3s. 8d. in the £., and certainly in rural districts they were not more than 2s. 6d. before the passing of the Education Act and taking into consideration that Act they could not possibly be above 3s. in the £. It appeared to them it would have been better for the clergy of the Church of England to have relied on the voluntary efforts of those who supported them, as did the ministers of other churches throughout the country. It might be pointed out that there was an additional reason in the last few years for revising the decision which the House of Commons then came to, and that was, that since the last Agricultural Rates Continuance Act—which included this Bill—was passed the Education Act of 1902 had been put on the Statute-book, by which the Church of England had been relieved of a very large part of those subscriptions which they formerly devoted to their schools, and which might now, with advantage, be handed over to the clergy. Lastly, he would point out in reference to the Bill, that while it professed to be a Bill for the relief of poor clergy, it distributed something like £100,000 broadcast among the Church of England clergy, and the greater part of that money did not go to the poorest clergymen. Like the Agricultural Rates Act, it was indiscriminate in its relief, and it really did not assist those who most needed help. The relief given under it was a gift from the general taxpayers' pocket to a particular class, and as such they objected to it, and in opposition to it as such he begged to move his Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 6, after the word 'effect,' to insert the words 'except in respect of The Tithe Rent-Charge (Rates) Act, 1899.'"—(*Mr. Trevelyan.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central) said he was astonished that this Motion should have been brought forward without having been placed on the Paper. They had a whole day's discussion on the Second Reading of the Bill, and, as far as he could remember, the question of excluding the Tithe Rent-Charge Act was not once mentioned in the course of that debate, yet the hon. Member now came down to the House, and without the slightest notice proposed that that Act should be excluded from the operation of the Bill. The hon. Member had given no reason for his Amendment, or, at any rate, he had heard absolutely none, except the single one that by the Education Act of 1902 so much had been done for the schools of the Church of England that less subscriptions than heretofore would be expected from the supporters of that Church.

MR. TREVELYAN: No; what I intended to convey was that the voluntary subscriptions which previously went to the schools might very well now be given to the clergy.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said he did not think that that very much improved the position. Did the hon. Member seriously suggest to the House that the clergy of the Church of England ought in future to be made more dependent than heretofore upon the subscriptions of their parishioners. They had not hitherto derived their income from that source and they, on that side of the House at any rate, were not prepared for one moment to support the idea. He would like to remind the House in connection with this proposal that the Act which the hon. Member was led to exclude was based on the Report of a Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the question of local taxation, and that one of the members of that Commission who differed from his colleagues on almost every other subject agreed with them that tithe rent-charge attached to benefices should enjoy the same privileges as agricultural land. He might, too, remind the Committee that tithe rent-charge had already been included, together with agricultural land, in the exemptions from rating under the Public Health Acts. It was, in fact, treated on the same footing as agricultural land, and he failed to see any reason whatever why such an exception should be made as had been proposed. He trusted the Committee would reject the Amendment of the hon. Member.

MR. PURVIS (Peterborough) said that the Amendment was moved for reasons which the House fully appreciated, and that the question of tithe rent-charge had been imported for a specific reason, although it was very remote from the subject-matter of the Bill.

MR. TREVELYAN: It is in the Bill.

MR. PURVIS said the Bill, the renewal of which they were discussing, was most carefully debated when it was originally before the House, and he remembered that in 1896, for no less that twenty-one hours at a stretch, the House was engaged in discussing it. The question of tithe rent-charge, like many other questions connected with local taxation, was too remote for a practical House like the Mother of Parliaments to attend to at that moment. Times had changed very much since 1896, when they discussed the Agricultural Rates Act. Since then a Royal Commission had given its Report, and he submitted that the most practical thing they could do would be to act on the specific recommendations of that Commission without allowing this red herring to be drawn across the trail. He did not wish to say anything objectionable, but he might use an expression which he had heard in the North, and tell the hon. Member that he must put his red herring into his pocket. The Committee had met that day for a specific object, and in these times, when revolution was in the air in regard to ideas of land taxation, it would be an appalling and even a disastrous thing to allow what was already the law of the land to be thus changed. It would be most inexpedient and unworkmanlike for the Committee to allow itself to be drawn aside in the immediate presence of a great revolution in regard to rates and taxes by allowing this Amendment to be passed. It would make confusion worse confounded if any such thing were permitted, and he was quite convinced that hon. Members on that side of the House knew full well what the reasons were which induced hon. Members opposite to bring forward such an Amendment. It was simply intended to promote sectarian and Party purposes.

LORD EDMUND FITZMAURICE (Wiltshire, Cricklade) said he really could not understand why the President of the Local Government Board and the hon. Member for Peterborough had expressed such extreme horror and astonishment at the action of the hon. Member for Elland in moving his Amendment without notice. Naturally they disagreed with its object, but the hon. Member had acted entirely in accordance with practice, and he failed to see why special complaint should be made against him. With regard to the Amendment, he thought it was fair to argue that tithe rent-charge in its essential elements differed from the other hereditaments which had enjoyed the benefit of these exemptions, and that the laity of the Church of England should be asked to do more than they now did to support their own clergy, after the manner of the Nonconformists. A Bishop of the Church of England made a speech only the other day in which he declared that the comparison between the voluntary subscriptions to the Church of England and to other denominations should make the laity of the Church of England ashamed of themselves.

MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) said the noble Lord had declared it was the right of any Member to move an Amendment which was in order when it pleased him. Of course it was, but his complaint was that the hon. Member for Elland had taken an extremely unusual course. Nobody would deny that. Here they had a Bill practically accepted by the larger number of Members opposite, and to which a certain number of Amendments had been on the Paper for some days, yet at the last moment they had sprung upon them an Amendment with reference to a matter to which no allusion was made in the course of the Second Reading debate. He thought that under the circumstances the criticisms of the President of the Local Government Board were perfectly legitimate. His right hon. friend had said that only one reason had been advanced in support of the Amendment, but as a matter of fact there were two others which he personally thought were absolutely futile. No doubt it was true that when the Bill was introduced in the first instance the opposition to the proposal regarding tithe rent-charge was as great and as bitter as to the Agricultural Rating Act itself. But he did not consider that a sufficient reason for continuing the opposition to the Bill now. Then another reason advanced was that this was the richest Church in the whole world. He was not sure of that fact, but he was sure that the revenues derived from this particular source had fallen enormously in late years, and, therefore, that reason lost force. He sincerely trusted that the hon. Member would not persevere with an Amendment which, to his mind, was uncalled for in the extreme.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said he was surprised to hear the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford preach the doctrine that an Amendment in Committee ought to be given notice of before the Committee stage was reached.

MR. CHAPLIN: I did not say that; I said nothing of the kind.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: You endorsed the complaint that had been made of the way in which the Amendment had been brought forward.

MR. CHAPLIN: I said that, under the circumstances which I specified, the course adopted by the hon. Member was unusual in the extreme, and I do not think that that can be denied.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he thought it was very usual indeed to move an Amendment in Committee without giving any notice of it. He had even seen the Government bring forward proposals in regard to the Standing Orders of that House without any notice whatever. There were occasions on which notice could not be given. As a matter of fact, hon. Members often did not examine Bills until the day they were coming on for discussion; and it was perfectly conceivable that the hon. Member who moved this Amendment only thought of it as he came into the House that afternoon. But, apart from the merits of the Amendment, he had some objection to the Bill. First, he objected because it was a very special instance of illusive, referential legislation. It proposed to renew one Act, but, as a matter of fact, it would actually renew four other Acts, and thus they would be renewing in one Bill—in one very short clause of four lines — five Acts of Parliament altogether. So far as he could see, there was no reason why the hon. Member should not move to except the other Acts. It certainly was putting the House in a very awkward position in calling on it to discuss five Acts when only one was actually before it in the Bill. Again, he ventured to point out that every one of these five Acts was founded upon an absolutely false system of finance, because the payments in respect of them were obtained by anticipation, and every farthing was excluded from the national accounts. This raised a very large financial question. The particular amount which would be affected by the operation of this Bill was comparatively small. Reference to the Finance Act would show that probably about £1,500,000 was paid in respect of the Agricultural Rates Act in the year 1894, in addition to £119,000 in connection with the tithe rent-charge. But his objection applied to the manner in which the money was raised, because it was most unconstitutionally intercepted from the Revenue on its way to the Exchequer. He submitted that that was a most irregular method of raising money, for the Bill escaped the usual financial guarantees relating to money Bills. There was no doubt, as the hon. Member for Peterborough had said, that the most pressing need of the day was the reconstitution and recasting of the whole of our rating system, and this was a consequence of their having neglected it for so many years, in spite of repeated promises from both sides of the House to attend to it.

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: Order, order! That subject is not in order in discussing this Amendment.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said his desire was to point out that this was a most inopportune moment for dealing with this question, because the renewal of Acts of this nature prevented them dealing with much more serious questions which were becoming most pressing, and he hoped that the attention of the Government would be given to them. In regard to these particular Acts the principle had been agreed to long ago, it had twice been approved by the House and he, therefore, agreed with the right hon. Gentleman behind him that the Act ought to again be renewed. He could not, however, allow it to be renewed without making one more protest against the evil which Bills of this nature produced. He protested against them as illusive, referential legislation, and as perpetuating the grossly false and misleading financial system of anticipating revenue and not allowing it to pass into the Exchequer.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said he understood that the object of the Amendment was to withdraw from tithe rent-charge in this country the rating exemption it had hitherto enjoyed. The Bill did not apply to Ireland, although they had tithe rent-charge there. But the difference between the two countries was, whereas in England tithe rent-charge went to the support of the clergy, in Ireland it was paid into a great public fund which was reserved for public uses. In England the rating relief was fully extended to the tithe rent-charge because it was the property of a powerful and influential Church; but in Ireland, because it went to a fund held in trust for the general benefit of the country, no such relief was granted to it. Under these circumstances there was a good deal to be said for the Amendment. Personally he took an active part with the Radical Party in opposing the Agricultural Rating Act, because he believed the principle embodied in it to be essentially vicious financially as well as demoralising, and he remembered he was among those who were suspended in the course of the discussion. The evil of such an Act as the Agricultural Rating Act was that, once passed, the mischief could never be undone. Vested interests grew up and the Act could never be repealed. The whole system of equivalent grants was bad; and the sum they received in Ireland might be infinitely better disposed of than it now was. Too much of it went into the pockets of the landlords.

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: Order, order! That question does not arise on this Amendment.

MR. DILLON admitted it had nothing to do with it, but he was explaining the reasons which induced him to support the Amendment, and was explaining there was no analogous relief in Ireland to that given to England under this Bill.

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: But the hon. Gentleman has no right on this Amendment to discuss the system obtaining in Ireland.

MR. DILLON submitted that he was absolutely in order in drawing an argument from the Irish system and in arguing that the principle which was applied to Ireland should be made to apply to England. He would not, however, pursue the matter further.

*MR. TALBOT (Oxford University) said he had no desire to prolong the discussion, but he would like to point out that whilst hon. Gentlemen opposite did not appear to have very strong objection to this Bill the Amendment raised a very serious issue. Tithe rent-charge had an intimate connection with the question of agricultural land, and they could not separate the rating of tithe rent-charge from the rating on such land. To divorce one from the other as a subject for exemption would be to do injury to a very deserving and certainly not a wealthy class of men, viz., the rural clergy. He was not going to discuss the question whether or not more should be done by voluntary effort to augment their incomes; on this point he was largely in agreement with what had been said by the noble Lord, but he did wish to draw attention to the fact that this Amendment, if carried, would inflict a great hardship upon the class to whom he had referred, some of whom he had the honour to represent in that House, and so great a change to their detriment in a Bill largely non-contentious ought not to be sprung upon the House in the way in which it had been. He appealed to the hon. Member in the interest of the courtesies of debate not to press his Amendment.

MR. EMMOTT (Oldham) admitted the difficulty arising from the fact that this point had been raised so suddenly, but he thought it was going a little too far to say that it showed a lack of courtesy to the House on the part of the hon. Member for Elland. It was not unusual and it was not against the rules, and, therefore, he thought enough had been said upon the point. The right hon. Gentleman who last spoke had told them that they could not logically separate the rating of tithe from the agricultural rating generally, but he believed the separation was already made so far as lay tithe was concerned, because the Bill only dealt with tithe paid to the Church of England. That argument, therefore, fell to the ground. He was the last man in the world to desire to adopt a policy of pin-pricks towards the Church of England, and he thought that sometimes, perhaps, that course was adopted on his side of the House. He desired to dissociate himself entirely from it; but, on the other hand, the worst thing that could be done for the Church was to pass special legislation of this character, which was felt as a hardship by a great many of the people of the country. There were other hardships in connection with rating to which he need not refer, and this question of the rating of tithe might surely have been left until the larger question of rating was dealt with. The other day they had brought before the House another rating question in connection with East Ham, and the Prime Minister in speaking on it told East Ham that it ought to cut its coat according to its cloth. Now that argument went a very long way when they were dealing with the question of rates, and it might be applied to tithe as well as to other matters. He did think the Government had made a very great mistake in trying to pass a measure regarding clerical tithe without dealing with the whole question of rating upon a broad basis. They were told that a revolution was approaching. That was exactly the point—the revolution took such a desperately long time in coming. He would not care if there was any chance of its coming within the next year or two, but he was not sure that they would get it so soon, and, because the policy of relieving certain classes and omitting to give relief to other classes was being adopted, he should support his hon. friend if he went to a division.

MR. A. K. LOYD (Berkshire, Abingdon) rose to make a protest against the way in which this Amendment had been brought forward. It was a very serious matter. The hon. Member for Elland put down an Amendment at the last minute, when the House had assembled under the belief that they were going to discuss a totally different matter. The matter he charged himself with was a matter requiring the most careful study and impartial statement, and yet he furnished himself with all the fallacies which had been exploded over and over again, and he fired them off at the clergy of a Church with which his Party had no sympathy, making his attack under circumstances which rendered it almost impossible that justice should be done to the rural clergy throughout the country. But the hon. Member had undertaken a job which was too big for him. He had not really gone into the matter; if he had, he would have found that it was not a case of giving relief to the clergy at the expense of the general ratepayers at all. The relief was given out of the Local Taxation Account in order that it might not be taken at the expense of the other ratepayers of the parish from which the tithe was drawn. The hon. Member had said it was alleged by the Government in support of the Bill that the clergy were very poor, and in consequence this relief ought to be given to them. He did not know where the hon. Member was at the time the Bill was discussed. He spoke very positively, but that certainly was not the ground on which the Bill was advocated by the Government.

MR. TREVELYAN: I remember the debate very well. The hon. Member is stating the arguments which his side used. I have stated those which were advanced on our side.

MR. A. K. LOYD regretted that the hon. Member had so entirely lost recollection of what took place. He had no hesitation in saying that the "poverty of the clergy" was not the ground advanced, and there was no Government of modern times which could push through the House of Commons a Bill to compensate a number of persons because they were poor. The thing was absurd on the face of it. The "poverty of the clergy" might have been one of the expressions used in the course of the debate, but it certainly was not the ground on which the Bill was brought in. The real ground was that as long ago as 1840 a grievance existed about the way in which the clergy were rated, and that grievance was acknowledged by Mr. Gladstone, the Poor Law Commissioners, and Sir George Cornewall Lewis. It was one of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners who at that time insisted that the grievance was one which ought to be looked into, and when the Bill of 1840 was passed there was an express undertaking that it should be dealt with, but such was the helpless condition of the clergy that they had been swindled from that time to this. The clergy of the Church of England were not able to fight for themselves in a matter of this kind, and in consequence it was a notorious fact that they had had to submit to a gross injustice all these years. The old fallacy that rates were taken into consideration at the time of the commutation had been exploded over and over again, and he asserted it was a monstrous shame that such a charge should be brought out simply for the purpose of belabouring the clergy of a Church with which the hon. Gentleman was not in sympathy. He noticed that the noble Lord the Member for Cricklade was much more careful of the way in which he put the matter, for he admitted the difficulty of the subject. The real facts were that when the returns were sent in for the purposes of commutation it was found that there were a number of cases in which the tenant paid the rates and deducted the amount from the tithe. It was true that that was brought into the calculation, but there was not one particle of truth in the assertion that the general question of rates was taken into account. There was a real grievance in this matter. The Royal Commission had reported in favour of this relief, and consequently everything said against this Bill was equally directed against the Royal Commission He protested most earnestly against this matter being brought forward without notice in order to snatch an advantage against the rural clergy who for so many years had been suffering under the grievance relieved by this Bill.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said the hon. Member who had just spoken entirely misunderstood the case. This Amendment was not brought forward from any special antagonism to the Church, or with any idea of attacking the Church. The present rating system inflicted great injustice on many classes of people, and if one class was dealt with all should be dealt with. That was the foundation of the opposition to the Agricultural Rates Act and to the Tithe Rent-Charge Act. It was true that many of the country clergy were poor, but it might equally be said that many livings were paid much better than the services of the clergy demanded. But that was not the point. The clergy had their rating grievance in common with many other classes, and the only reason for their being singled out for relief was that they were poor.

MR. A. K. LOYD: It was on account of this specific grievance.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER held that many other classes had specific grievances, and would doubtless have been singled out for relief if they had had the additional claim of poverty. There was a great difference between the two Bills here concerned. The depression in agriculture was injurious not only to the class employed, but to the whole country, because land was being driven out of cultivation, so that a strong case could be made out for the relief of those who paid rates on agricultural land. But in the case of the clergy the whole of the tithe might be taken away without the country as a whole being a penny the worse. Therefore the two Acts were on an entirely different footing. He agreed that the tithe rent-charge should be treated in the same way in England as in Ireland. In the latter country it had been left unrelieved, and he failed to see why the relief should be renewed in England. He submitted that the question had been brought forward in a thoroughly constitutional way. The House was in Committee, and this was a small question, and he failed to see how the supporters of the clergy could complain because the matter had been brought on. Seeing that so many hon. Members took so much interest in the matter it was perhaps a pity that the Amendment had not been placed on the Paper, but that was no reason why it should not be considered. Exceptional legislation with regard to rates was mischievous and dangerous. Every time the rating question was dealt with piecemeal it deferred the day when justice should be introduced into the whole rating system, and for that reason he would oppose all measures for altering the rating system piecemeal. He trusted that before long the question of rating would be forced upon the Government and that it would be dealt with in such a way as to do justice to all classes. By supporting such Amendments as the one before the Committee he believed they would be taking a step towards securing that justice for all.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 138; Noes, 217. (Division List No. 153.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Austin, Sir John
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Benn, John Williams
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Cawley, Frederick
Cheetham, John Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crooks, William
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dillon, John
Dobbie, Joseph

Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Edwards, Frank
Ellice, Capt EC (SAndrw'sBghs
Ellis, John Edward (Notts)
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay,Alexander(Lanark,NE
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Lewis
Harrington, Timothy
Hayden, John Patrick
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, DavidBrynmor(Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, VincentP (Cavan, W
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alex (Donegal, W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Fadden, Edward
M'Kenna, Reginald
Mooney, John J.
Moss, Samuel
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal(TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James(Roscommon,N
O'Shaughnessy, P.J.
O'Shee, James John
Parrott, William
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Perks, Robert William
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Richards, Thomas(W.Monm'th
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Soares, Ernest J.
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas, David Alfred(Merthyr
Thompson, DrEC(Monagh'n,N.
Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Woodhouse, SirJT (Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Trevelyan and Mr. Emmott.

NOES.

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen,Augustus HenryEden
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt HnHugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt Hn. Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A.J.(Manch'r
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, RtHn GeraldW.(Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. AllenBenjamin
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bill. Charles
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, Lt-Col.HF (Middlesex)
Bowles, T. Gibson(King'sLynn
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Campbell, RtHnJA (Glasgow)
Campbell, JHM (Dublin Univ.
Carson Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, RtHnJA (Worc.
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim,S
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dixon-Hartland, SirFredDixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fellowes, RtHnAilwynEdward
Fergusson, Rt.Hn.SirJ.(Manc'r
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir RB (Inv'rn'ssB'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Fitzroy, Hon. EdwardAlgernon
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S(Warwick, S.W.
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Godson, Sir AugustusFrederick
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-
Gorst, Rt Hon Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gretton, John
Gunter, Sir Robert
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton,Marq.of(L'nd'nderry
Hardy,Laurence (Kent,Ashf'rd
Harris, Dr.Fredk R. (Dulwich)
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Heath, SirJames(StaffordsNW
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse,RtHnH.(Somers't,E
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J.F.(Sheffield,Brightside
Howard, John (Kent,F'verh'm
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham
Hozier, Hon.James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse

Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Kennaway, Rt.Hn. Sir John H.
Kenyon, Hn. Geo. T.(Denbigh)
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Kimber, Sir Henry
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, SirJoseph(Monm'th)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (YorksNR
Lee, ArthurH.(Hants.,Fareh'm
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Col. Charles W(Evesham
Long, Rt.RnWalter (Bristol, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, ReginaldJ(Portsmouth)
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Iver, Sir Lewis(EdinburghW
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Maxwell, RtHn.SirH.E.(Wigt'n
Maxwell, WJ.H.(Dumfriesshire
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, John Thr'gm'rton
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milner, Rt Hn Sir Frederick G.
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh, N.
Mitchell, William (Burnley)
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, DavidJ(Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, HerbertPike(Darlington
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliffe, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Ritchie, Rt.Hn. Chas.Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, SirHarryS.(Limehouse
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, Abel H.(Hertford, East)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset
Stanley, Rt Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, RtHn.JG.(Oxf'd Univ.
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, RtHn Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Welby, Lt.-Col. ACE.(Taunton)
Welby, Sir Charles G.E.(Notts.)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, H(Ashton und. Lyne
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wills, ArthurWalters (N.Dorset
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, SirWH (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. ER(Bath)
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire) said the Amendment he proposed emphasised the necessity of making this Act purely temporary in its character. When the principal Act was introduced it was denounced as a gross and flagrant instance of class legislation, and it had supplied doles totalling £2,500,000, which amounted to 5s. per household of the population. Therefore the labourer earning 15s. a week had to work two days a year in order to provide this dole to the wealthy landlords. He did not move his Amendment having in view any proposal for a root-and-branch repeal of the original Act, because, as in the case of individuals, if an ill-considered course was embarked upon it was much more difficult to alter that course than to enter upon it. What was true of the individual was still more true when they came to deal with public questions affecting a great many rating authorities. Once they established vested interests they could not all at once repeal and alter the measure which created them. They would either have to make any alteration gradually, or make it as part of a general alteration of the rating system. He moved this Amendment because the reform he had alluded to was largely overdue. The Government ought to have undertaken the recasting of the rating system at an earlier date. The Royal Commission upon Local Rating, presided over by Lord Balfour of Burleigh, was appointed in August, 1896, and reported in May 1901; and they had now reached May, 1905 without a single step having been taken to give effect to the recommendations of that Commission. Legislation dealing with the whole recasting of the rating system in England and Scotland was largely overdue and ought to be undertaken before the expiration of the next four years, for which period the principal Act was being extended by this Bill.

Apart from the general recasting of the rating system and what might be called piecemeal legislation, there were several matters of detail which ought to receive early attention either at the hands of the present Government or the Government that was likely to succeed them. Complaints were forthcoming from all parts of the country that the method of distribution of the grant under the principal Act was inequitable and worked badly. In every case where the parish rate had been raised the system of distribution adopted both in England and Scotland under the principal Act had operated very injuriously because the system of distribution was that the rates contributed in 1896 should form the criterion for the distribution of the grant-in-aid. Where there had been an increase the result was that the grant conferred by the principal Act had been insufficient to meet the shortage in the rates upon agricultural land. In the case of Scotland, with which he was most familiar, although it applied to both countries equally, he understood that the effect of the principal Act was to restrict the rateable value of agricultural land to three-fifths of the true value appearing in the valuation roll, and in order to make good the deficiency of the rateable value thus created the subvention provided for in the principal Act was granted on the basis of 1896.

Take the case of a parish whose valuation had been going up, and whose valuation was, say, £15,000 in 1896, composed to the extent of £3,000 of rating upon buildings, and to the extent of £12,000 of rating upon agricultural land, and let it be supposed that in such a case the amount required to be raised by rates had risen by £375, the net result of applying the Act was to transfer from the shoulders of the agricultural ratepayers to the shoulders of the urban ratepayers a proportion of the burden which would otherwise have been borne by the agricultural ratepayers. In the case supposed, where the amount required had risen £375 the burden would have been borne to the extent of £75 by the urban ratepayers, and to the extent of £300 by the agricultural ratepayers, but under the Act as applied the urban ratepayers had to pay £125, and the rural ratepayers had only to pay £250, with the result that the urban occupiers had to pay nearly double the amount which they would otherwise have done. He was assured that was not an isolated case, In that particular the Act required modification. It would be convenient that in passing this Continuance Act the Government should feel itself free in such a matter of detail. The Amendment was not necessarily directed against the principle of the measure.

Take another illustration of how unjustly the original Act operated — the case of a parish whose rates had fallen. There was a parish within his own knowledge which had a poor rate of 1s. 4d. falling upon occupiers in 1896. The rate had fallen in the meantime, with the result that the subvention given under the principal Act paid the whole of the poor rate and entirely relieved the occupiers. Surely that was a very anomalous and extraordinary result. Then in another parish the subvention was paid for the rate which was imposed in 1896, but which had since been taken off, so that the parish actually got from the grant under the Act payment in respect of a rate it did not levy. That also seemed to be a very anomalous result. Therefore he submitted it should be made perfectly clear that the continuation of the Act was only temporary, that it might be amended during the four years, and that it should in any case be amended at the end of four years.

He desired also to draw attention to the necessity for dealing in a different way with site values. He understood that when the principal Act was under discussion this matter was raised and discussed, but, as the Committee had been more than once reminded in the course of the debate, matters had progressed since 1896. A Royal Commission had sat and taken evidence, and there was appended to the Report of the Commission a very weighty and important recommendation by a minority of their number, including so good a Conservative as Lord Balfour of Burleigh, pointing out that site value should not be rated on the same basis as agricultural land and that it ought to bear an additional burden. What was the present position with regard to site values and agricultural rating? However much ground might have a value, over and above its agricultural value, that additional value attaching to it by the proximity of population was not subjected either to Imperial or local taxation. The population of large towns was pressing out to the suburbs anxious for land, and they found that the land was held by speculators. He instanced a case which had come under his own observation in Edinburgh. A piece of land there was feued for a feu-duty of £2,000 a year. There was no building on the ground; it was only occupied as agricultural land.

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: We are dealing only with agricultural land at present.

MR. BLACK: With all deference it is a rating Bill for agricultural land, but I am going to show that under the Act which is being renewed certain land is treated as agricultural land. I am adducing that as a reason why the Continuance Act should be made temporary.

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: It is out of order to have a discussion on that matter on this occasion. This is a Continuance Bill and the question is whether the Act should be continued or not.

MR. BLACK: With great deference my point is that the principal Act, being a faulty Act, should not be continued for four years. The extension should be plainly only until something better can be done. I am surely in order in saying that the Act is a faulty Act. I am only showing why it should not be extended definitely for four years.

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: I think that is outside of the scope of the Act altogether.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) asked whether it would not be in order to urge that the Act ought to be made temporary on the ground that site values should be dealt with in the meantime.

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: No, I think that would be out of order.

MR. BLACK: Of course, I must bow to your ruling, but I think it is wrong. [Cries of "Order."]

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: It is not in order to challenge the ruling of the Chairman.

MR. BLACK: I bow to it at all events. The Continuance Act, the hon. Member submitted, should be so framed as to make it plain to all parties called upon to contract under it that it might be altered in the course of the four years. Hundreds of contracts would be made during the next four years throughout the country, and thousands of rates would be fixed on the terms of this Act. Was the measure to be temporary during the four years, or was it to be recast during that period? It should be explicitly stated what the duration was to be. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 6, after the word 'if,' to insert the words 'for a period not to extend beyond the thirty-first day of March.'"—(*Mr. Black.*)

Question proposed, That those words be there inserted.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said the mover of the Amendment was a lawyer, but he could not help thinking that the hon. Member had formed an extraordinary idea in respect to the powers of Parliament. He seemed to think that if this Amendment were introduced, it would be quite competent to do that which otherwise it would not be competent—to alter the Act in the next four years. He further seemed to think it would be impossible for Parliament to pass a further Continuance Bill after the year 1910. Those were very extraordinary propositions to come from a lawyer.

MR. BLACK: I did not advance them, I may say.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said if the hon. Gentleman did not advance them the effect of his Amendment was *nil*.

It would not make any difference whatever in the Act the House of Commons had now to pass. There was another point to which he should like to call the attention of the hon. Member, namely, that if the Act as drafted was passed the effect would be that the Agricultural Rates Act, 1896, would be extended to March 31st, 1910. If the hon. Member's Amendment were accepted the Act would be extended "for a period not to extend beyond the 31st day of March" in whatever year might be substituted for 1910 by the hon. Gentleman. He himself did not know whether it would have the effect of extending the Act or not. The Committee would observe that the hon. Gentleman did not say that the Act should be extended for a certain period; he merely proposed that the Act should not be extended for more than a certain period. He himself was not a lawyer, but he was free to confess that if the Amendment were passed he should not know whether the Act had been continued or not. It seemed to him to be a very serious and substantial objection to the hon. Gentleman's Amendment that he had practically asked the Committee to introduce words which, in his opinion, would bind either a subsequent Parliament, or this Parliament at a later date. It was impossible for any Act passed through this House to bind either the same Parliament or a future Parliament, and on that ground he submitted that the hon. Member's Amendment would make no practical difference. The hon. Member might say that he desired to introduce a warning to agricultural ratepayers that in the opinion of this Parliament at the present time it was inexpedient to continue the Act beyond a certain date, but the suggestion of the hon. Member appeared to him to be wholly out of place. Even supposing it was in the power of this Parliament to bind its successors, was it a desirable thing to do? It seemed to him that it would be an eminently undesirable thing to do. This Bill did meet a very serious grievance. Supposing it was in the power of this Parliament to bind its successors, it appeared to him that it would be an undesirable thing to do. They were all agreed that this Bill did meet a very serious grievance. Would it be desirable at the end of four years, granting they had the power to bind themselves not to continue this Act, even though a comprehensive scheme of reform of local taxation had been passed? It would be the height of folly. When the Second Reading of this Bill was being discussed the right hon. Member for the Stirling Burghs stated that a measure which had lasted for nine years ought not to be abruptly brought to a termination. But supposing this Bill were continued for two or four years longer, the argument of the right hon. Member for the Stirling Burghs would be all the stronger. He could not accept the Amendment, which appeared to him to be absurd.

LORD EDMUND FITZMAURICE thought they were all agreed that his hon. friend had made out a very good ground for bringing forward his Amendment. On both sides of the House it was admitted that the existing law of rating was most unsatisfactory and urgently called for redress. As he understood, the object of his friend was to place certain words on the Paper, and get them incorporated in the Act, which would, as far as possible, bind Parliament within a period of four years to legislate upon this question in a shape, not temporary, but permanent. Although he quite recognised the excellence of the object and intention of his hon. friend, he very much doubted whether it was really possible, from a constitutional point of view, to mortgage the time of our Parliamentary posterity. Even if the Bill passed as it had been presented by the Government, and if within the period of four years Parliament succeeded in passing a financial measure for the reform of local taxation, it would be within the constitutional rights of Parliament to repeal an Act of this kind, for it was well known that Parliament was supreme and could do anything, as the saying was, except turn a man into a woman, or a woman into a man. He believed his hon. friend would serve no object in pressing his Amendment. They were all agreed that this Bill was a temporary measure and that nothing they could do could bind the hands of their successors.

Mr. GEORGE WHITELEY (Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey) said he would support the Amendment of his hon. friend. Any Amendment which would shorten the duration of the Act or bring pressure upon Parliament in the future to deal with the whole question of local taxation he considered laudable. The Government would have done better if they had asked for a yearly renewal. If he had been on the Government side of the House he would have tried to get the Government to regard it as a temporary measure, and renew it year by year until the whole question of local taxation was dealt with. But that might be when, in the whirligig of time, a large Liberal majority was returned to this House which were stronger in their principles than some of his hon. friends. They might say, if a proposal were made to renew the Act again: "Oh, no; the land has had its run, and it is high time that these doles should cease until everyone can join in." He suggested that his hon. friend should withdraw his Amendment, and another should be proposed for a yearly renewal. In that case he did not think there would be much opposition to it from that side of the House.

Mr. SPEAR (Devonshire, Tavistock) said he hoped the Government would resist the Amendment. Although the Act fell short in some respects, yet in the main they believed it gave to the agricultural industry some degree of relief, which it justly required and demanded. Agriculturists did not want this to be a permanent settlement. They claimed it was merely carrying out the recommendation of the Royal Commission, who saw the injustice which the agricultural classes suffered. They claimed still that the relief was inadequate, and they were as anxious as any section of the community, not only in the interests of agriculturists, but also of the trading classes, whom they recognised had a grievance, that there should be a complete re-ngement of the basis of local taxation. y welcomed this measure, and were afraid to have the question reopened, use they were satisfied that the e closely the question was examined into the more just and equitable it would be found. But he objected to the Amendment because the impression created by it in the minds of agriculturists would be that the hon. Gentleman wanted to curtail the advantage given by the Second Reading of the Act. The removal of the unjust burden from agriculturists was due not only to the farmer, but it did something to retard rural depopulation, and in the interests of the whole community it was an essential measure of justice. The agriculturists only accepted it as a temporary arrangement, however, and if a rearrangement of local taxation could be made next year certainly the advantage under this Bill would go, and therefore he failed to see the use of the Amendment. As it would probably take three or four years to deal with the question of local taxation, the Amendment would cause unrest, and lead agriculturists to feel there was a possibility, if Liberals came into office, of their being deprived of this simple measure of justice.

*Mr. LEIF JONES (Westmorland, Appleby) said he had voted for the Second Reading of this Bill, but he wished to say a few words in support of this Amendment. He would not have voted for the original Act, but it had been in force for nearly ten years, and when one realised that in the county of Cumberland, for instance, twenty per cent. of the farms had been estimated to change hands annually, one saw that in nine years rents having adjusted themselves, to withdraw suddenly the grant under the Act would be to inflict a great hardship upon the occupying tenants. But, none the less, although he voted for the renewal, he felt that this question of the overhauling of the rating system was among the most pressing and important work which Parliament could undertake, and his objection to the lengthened period proposed was that for four years the subject would be withdrawn from the consideration of the House, and his desire was that the Bill should be brought up as often as possible, until permanently settled. It was for that reason he supported the Amendment. The right hon. Gentleman who was in charge of the Bill said it made no difference whether this Amendment was

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ord Edmund Fitzmaurice.

carried or not in its effect upon the action of the House, but it seemed to him that if this Amendment were carried the Act would come up automatically until the subject was dealt with. It had been urged that if it came up yearly the agriculturists would never know whether the Bill was going to be renewed or not for another year, but he did not know that that would be any great disadvantage from the point of view of the occupying farmers. If the tenants were to derive benefits from this Act it was essential that it should be understood that it was not permanent but only temporary, pending a final and equitable settlement.

SIR CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford) said that one was not often surprised at anything that happened in that House with regard to agriculture, but he confessed that he was astonished to see hon. Members of the House interested in land fighting for the limitation of the Rating Act. One was surprised to hear the other night hon. Members getting up and speaking against the Rating Act and then walking out without voting. He could not understand why hon. Gentlemen desired to limit the operation of the statute to two years, and did not know whether they thought they were going to have the millenium and a new Heaven and a new Earth at that time, or that they thought that then they would be on the right and they on that side on the left of the Speaker's Chair. If they thought that agriculture was going to look up under those circumstances he did not think they were very good students of history. He remembered that in 1894, when hon. Members opposite were on the Front Bench on the Government side, they used to get up and thank God that wheat was 19s. a quarter. He remembered that Sir William Harcourt, whom he always thought of with affection and regret, by his Budget Bill of 1894 put the last straw upon the back of the agricultural camel. What they wanted was not a Rating Act for a few years but a perpetual Rating Act. Did hon. Members think that agriculture was so prosperous now that they could do without this measure when they knew that last year there was 30 per cent. less of arable land under cultivation than there was the year before. According to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford, who knew what he was talking about, the farmers had lost £300,000,000 of their capital, and somewhat less than half the number of labourers were now employed upon the land than there were thirty years ago. Moreover, half of the land had in that period gone out of cultivation. What could be worse than a condition of things like that, which was owing to the incidence of taxation on land. Land was going out of tillage, fences were straggling into the fields, gates were off, cottages were falling down, and the agricultural population of the villages consisted of old men and boys.

This was an important matter nationally. It was not so important where a squire here and there went down or a farmer here and there went to the workhouse. The important thing for the country was the decadence of the agricultural population, which was due to the present rating and taxation of land. Out of 75,000 recruits for the Army, 25,000 were sent back because they could not comply with the wretched requirements of the War Office. It was because as time went on the population was being driven out of the villages and into the towns, that instead of getting as recruits the residents of the countrysides, the Army only obtained mill hands and other people of that stamp who had resided in towns. It was not however, by mill hands that the battle of Waterloo was fought and won, and in order to foster rural life again it would be worth the while of this country, instead of paying only half the rates of the agriculturists, to pay the whole. Under the present system they were losing the agricultural population of the country, and with it they were losing their virile force. He hoped hon. Gentlemen would vote against the Amendment, and if they did not he hoped their constituents would have something to say to them.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston) thought that under the circumstances the Amendment of his hon. friend behind him might be advantageously withdrawn in favour of a time limit of a year or two years. They had to remember in connection with this Act that all of those who passed it originally would be very glad to see the question of rating taken up, and they would be very glad to encourage any Government to grapple with that problem. He did not like the idea of the Act being continued for four years; he thought it ought to be brought up from year to year, which would force the Government of the day to take into consideration a real solution of the general problem of rating. If they had year by year brought before them the general necessity of meeting and dealing with this question they would be more likely to grapple with the difficult problem before them than if they put it off for four years. They had renewed the Act before, and the result was that for nine years the House of Commons had been neglecting the great subject of rating, and although they had had the Report of the Royal Commission they had not dealt with the problem. He did not want to encourage a policy of that sort. It was an urgent problem, and therefore he thought that in the interest of all parties, those who were anxious to relieve the agricultural population and the congestion of the town population would do well to renew this Bill only from year to year, and he would ask his hon. friend to consider whether he would not withdraw his Amendment and support an Amendment to renew the Bill from year to year, so that whatever Government, whether Liberal or Tory, was in power they would have to deal with that question.

Mr. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.) asked as a point of order whether if a division was taken upon this subject it would preclude the Committee from dealing with and deciding a definite time for the duration of the Bill—whether it precluded the discussion of the question of two years.

***The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN** did not think it would preclude such a discussion.

Mr. CHAPLIN said he simply rose in the interest of the progress of debate, and hoped the Amendment would not be withdrawn. They had discussed this question for a considerable period, and now his hon. friend on the Front Opposition Bench suggested that the Amendment should be withdrawn, and that they should have another discussion as to whether the Act was to be renewed from year to year. He should take the opportunity of preventing the Amendment being withdrawn.

Mr. DALZIEL said that he could not agree with the appeal which had been made to his hon. friend to withdraw the Amendment before the Committee, because, in his judgment, it raised a separate and distinct issue from that mentioned by the hon. Gentleman on the Front Opposition Bench. He, therefore, hoped this Amendment would be disposed of. They had had a little homily from the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill, who lectured his hon. friend on his want of legal knowledge. It was, however, a remarkable fact that with a Bill of this character which raised legal issues they had not had previously any speech from any member of the legal profession, and he was much surprised that the right hon. Gentleman, anxious as he was to get this Bill through without unnecessary debate, should have thought it useful to introduce outside issues which had no connection with the arguments of his hon. friend. The proposal of the Amendment was that it should be possible for Parliament at any time to deal with the rating question. That was the simple issue. [Cries of "No!"] That was why hon. Gentlemen opposite failed to appreciate the bearing of the Amendment of his hon. friend. The right hon. Gentleman said it would be possible, even if the Amendment were not adopted, to alter the provisions of the Bill. It was possible, but if it was going to be in operation for four years, was it conceivable that any Government would interfere with it. It was idle to say that if the Bill was to go on for four years any Government would interfere with it at any particular time. If it was accepted in its present form its principle would be adopted and the Bill, for all practical purposes, would be in operation for fou years.

The reason his hon. friend had not been able to put his Amendment in a more simple form was that the Government, in order to limit debate, had had resort to the method of reference. This Bill referred to a past Bill, and therefore they were unable to understand the issue before them, as they had to speak within one clause. He objected to a Bill of this important character being brought forward in this manner. What, however, was the main reason of his hon. friend for bringing forward this Amendment? It was the reason adduced by the Government itself when the Bill was originally brought forward, viz., that in the interval before it came up for renewal inquiry would be made, the Report of the Royal Commission would be presented, the whole question could then be reopened and it could be considered whether or not the Bill should be renewed. That was the principle which his hon friend wished to introduce at the present time. What his hon. friend said was that the Government had had the Report of the investigations; that they paid no heed to the investigations; that they had shut their eyes to the whole question of rating which ought to be considered in a matter of this kind; and that they were going beyond their power in tying up, for the next four years, the question of rating in this Bill.

He did not know how those who, representing town constituencies had voted for the Land Values Bill, were going to vote on this Amendment, but he was certain that if they voted against the Amendment that fact would be taken notice of in their constituencies. He could understand Members representing agricultural constituencies voting against the Amendment, but those who represented urban constituencies, if they were in favour of site values being properly dealt with, were bound to support the Amendment, and to make it possible for the Government to deal with the whole question of rating, in the near future, on proper lines. Did the hon. Baronet the Member for Mid-Essex suggest that this Bill was going to deal with all the questions to which he referred in the short speech he made? He himself did not agree with the facts put forward by the hon. Baronet with regard to the diminution of labour in agricultural districts. Would the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford declare that this Bill was going to deal with every grievance from which agriculture suffered at the present time. He believed that the right hon. Gentleman had a far different scheme. He had no doubt that a duty of 2s. a quarter on wheat would be far more acceptable to the right hon. Gentleman than anything contained in this Bill. He doubted whether this Bill would be of any real value to agriculture, or whether the land which was said to have gone out of cultivation would get any relief from it. He should vote for the Amendment because it limited the operation of the Bill.

Mr. RANDLES (Cumberland, Cockermouth) said he could conceive of nothing more mischievous than the Amendment. Nothing could be more mischievous than to always harass those who paid the rates. It might be a useful measure for the purpose of bringing before the House the views of hon. Members to the advantage of getting a better system of rating, but considering the time that must necessarily elapse before that question could be dealt with, it was, to say the least, mischievous to limit the term of this Bill. Agriculturists must look ahead more than twelve months, and this limitation for twelve months was simply keeping the farmer, who had to make provision for the future, in a state of unnecessary uncertainty. It was absolutely certain that the Act would not be allowed to drop during the course of the next two or three years, and if that was so why not let the farmer know that there was no intention of keeping from him the benefit he conceived himself to be entitled to under the Bill. He thought the House would be ill-advised in accepting the limitation proposed.

Sir EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.) said the hon. Member who had just spoken was under a misconception as to the scope of the Amendment. There was no suggestion to limit the period of the Bill to one year, and, so far as harassing the farmers was concerned, he would point out to the hon. Member that his own Party had for nine years been debating this question, and if anybody was harassing the farmer it was the Government. It had been said, too, during that discussion that the Amendment would prevent the Bill being made perpetual. But the Government itself had no intention of making the Bill perpetual. The Bill was to continue the Act till 1910, and the Amendment was to continue it till 1908. That was the only difference. The reason for this Amendment was that this question of rating ought to be dealt with at the earliest moment. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford, who introduced the measure originally, wished to make it perpetual, but after it had been discussed for some time it was shown quite clearly that the Bill was faulty, inadequate, and so unfair, that the right hon. Gentleman himself decided to limit it to five years. If the right hon. Gentleman thought the Bill was so good why was he ready to adopt that limitation. In 1896 or 1901 the Secretary to the Local Government Board said that the urban ratepayer had many grounds for receiving assistance. His calculation was that it would require £2,000,000 per annum, and they were unable to provide the money, although he quite admitted that the urban ratepayer ought to receive his fair share as well as the agricultural ratepayer. There were still four sessions during which this question might be dealt with, but the action of the Government would put off all discussion upon it till 1910. Why should the Government object to this matter being dealt with at the first possible moment, either by themselves or succeeding Governments. No hon. Member would say that farmers would think it was right that this question should be dealt with merely by the present Government, and not by any succeeding Government. District councils which were composed mainly of farmers had sent representations to him on the subject. He had received one of them that day calling attention to the enormous deficiency in the average of the grant under the Act, and stating that, in fact, the Act was of very little value to them. They calculated that the average loss of the last two years or so was £814 a year, as compared with what they would have received if they had received what they were entitled to when the Act was passed originally. This great loss had been brought about by the increased taxation put on them by the Government, and to the great expenditure entailed in the upkeep of the roads owing to the heavy motor traffic.

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN said the hon. Member must not make a Second Reading speech on the Bill at this stage.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY said he was simply giving an illustration showing the necessity of this matter being dealt with as soon as possible. If rates had not been increased so much of recent years there would not be the same necessity for immediate action. The whole argument in favour of the Amendment was that rates had increased so much that the grant was entirely inadequate, and that was the only reason he supported it. He was a supporter of the Act, and if he thought the Amendment would take away the advantages of the Act he would be the first to oppose it. His constituents on the small parish council to which he had referred were losing £800 a year, and they felt it was very necessary that something should be done at once to remove this unfairness. It was too often forgotten that although agricultural land was relieved to the extent of half its rates, the houses and buildings received no relief whatever.

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN ruled that the hon. Member was travelling beyond the Amendment.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY said he would not pursue the subject. His only reason for supporting the Amendment was to force the Government to deal with this question earlier than they would otherwise do.

*SIR H. MEYSEY-THOMPSON (Staffordshire, Handsworth) differed entirely from the object of the Amendment. He was one of those who believed that the relief afforded by the Act ought to be made perpetual. The justification for the Act in the first place was that an unfair amount of public burdens was thrown upon the owners of real property as compared with the owners of personal property. The latter had already in two particular instances received large permanent relief at the expense of the owners of real property. The first of those instances was with regard to tithes, which were originally intended to apply to all personal as well as real property.

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN said the subject of the hon. Member's remarks would arise more properly on the next Amendment.

MR. CHANNING appealed to the hon. Member for Banffshire to withdraw the Amendment, as the next point the Committee were anxious to discuss was a specific proposal to limit the Act to a definite time one way or the other, such as was embodied in the Amendments standing in the names of the hon. Member for South Molton, himself, and others. Such a proposal could be discussed in an intelligible way, and might lead to a practical result.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER said the point of the Amendment was that it would not only shorten the period of the Act by nearly two years but it would pu the Act in such a form as to indicate that it was a purely temporary measure and that legislation on the subject was expected at any time during the period of the continuance of the Act. It was practically pressing on the Government the necessity of further legislation. Agricultural Members on the other side of the House were alarmed because they thought that if the Bill came to an end two years earlier the question would have to be dealt with while the Liberal Party was in power. They seemed to forget, however, that the strength of the Liberal Party now-a-days was in the counties rather than in the towns, and was growing more rapidly in rural than in urban areas. The Liberal Party, therefore, would be to a great extent dependent upon its agricultural Members, and, consequently, there need be no fear that that Party would not endeavour to do something for agriculture. Supporters of the agricultural view seemed to be afraid that when the whole question of rating came up for consideration the case for agricultural land would not stand investigation. He protested against that view, for he believed that agricultural land paid more than its fair proportion of rates. What was needed was a thorough not a piecemeal investigation, followed by a permanent settlement. If the subject were properly investigated the claims of the farmers would be recognised and conceded. He pressed, therefore, for a general investigation and a speedy permanent settlement. He supported the Amendment because it would bring the measure to an end two years earlier and would make it the duty of whatever Government might then be in power to effect a settlement.

MR. AINSWORTH (Argyllshire) said the debate had been useful in that it had brought out the different points of view from which the two sides of the House regarded this measure. Many hon. Members opposite held the view that the grant should be made perpetual. That was an unworthy way of approaching the great question of rating. Whatever the claims of the applicants were they should be considered fairly and thoroughly and the matter put upon a sound basis for the future. Many members of the Opposition supported this Act strictly on the ground that it was a temporary measure, and they wanted a definite statement as to what the Government intended to do. Whatever Government was in power they would insist upon something being done as soon as possible.

MR. CHAPLIN asked whether the remarks of the hon. Member were relevant to the Amendment.

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: I do not think the hon. Member is out of order. The hon. Member, however, must not go into the principles of the whole Bill.

MR. AINSWORTH said he wished to draw attention to a point which he thought had an important bearing upon the question they were considering, and it showed the urgent necessity of having a definite statement from the Government as to how soon they intended to deal with the whole question. Here was a dole being given to a particular class, but what had happened to the rates in the meantime? There had been an enormous increase on account of the education rate. Did hon. Members consider that the renewal of the present Act dealt with the grievance of the agricultural interest in having had their rates increased in consequence of the Education Act?

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: That question does not relate to the renewal of this Act.

MR. AINSWORTH said his object was to show that as the education rate had become a great burden the sooner they remedied that state of things the better. They ought to have a definite statement from a responsible member of the Government as to when they were going to deal with this important question of rating which pressed so hardly upon the agricultural community.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax) said he did not propose to go into the principle of the Bill, and he would simply give one or two reasons why they ought to make a stand against the policy of drift. On previous occasions they had been given some hope that after the Royal Commission had reported the Government would deal in a general way with this question, but now they had relapsed into the policy of drift. It was not only hon. Members on the Opposition side who felt uncomfortable about this policy, because the hon. Member for Essex had stated in a speech to his constituents that he should be glad to be rid of the relief which he got under the Bill. This Amendment would give the hon. Member a chance of doing that.

MR. DILLON said the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford had raised a point of order which clearly showed that he did not in the least understand the Amendment before the Committee. The words which had been proposed would have no legislative effect whatever.

MR. CHAPLIN said the hon. Member must take this Amendment in connection with the other Amendments following it, which would reduce the period from four years to two.

MR. DILLON said the other Amendments had no necessary connection at all. Did the right hon. Gentleman mean that because a series of Amendments were put down in the name of the hon. Member that they necessarily hung together. This Amendment stood on its own basis and it had no necessary connection with the subsequent Amendments, which raised a totally different issue, namely, the limitation of the period to 1908 instead of 1910. The object of the present Amendment was to put into the Bill words which would give notice to all concerned that it was the intention of Parliament probably to do away with this Bill and substitute a general settlement of the rating question before the date mentioned in the Bill. In his opinion the words now proposed would have no legislative effect, but the hon. Member for Banffshire thought they would act as a note of warning to those making contracts that there was a chance of repealing this Bill and introducing another system of taxation before the date fixed by this Bill. Under this Act contracts were continually being made, and when they put in a date it was held to be a pledge that the Bill would not be altered until after that date. Men making contracts took that into account.

MR. BLACK said a good deal of misapprehension existed as to the effect of this Amendment. The hon. Member for East Mayo had exactly expressed the object he had in view, and what he intended by his Amendment. The qualifying words he had moved would show all parties that they might look out for changes within four years, either great or small. He proposed to press his Amendment to a division.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 163; Noes, 253. (Division List No. 154.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.

Barlow, John Emmott
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Brown, George M (Edinburgh)
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.)
Dillon, John
Dobbie, Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Ellice, CaptEC(SAndrw's Bghs
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alexander (Lanark, NE
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, RtHn HerbertJohn
Grant, Corrie
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hammond, John
Harrington, Timothy
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lamont, Norman
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Fadden, Edward
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
Mooney, John J.
Moss, Samuel
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal(TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Mara, James
O'Shee, James John
Parrott, William
Partington, Oswald
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Philipps, John Wynford
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Richards, Thomas(WMonm'th
Rickett, J. Compton
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, Charles E.
Seely, Maj J E B (Isle of Wight
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Spencer, Rt Hn C R(Northants)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, DavidAlfred (Merthyr
Thomas, JA(Glamorgan,Gower
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Tully, Jasper
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whiteley, George (York, W. R.
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, JW (Worcestersh. N.)
Woodhouse, Sir JT (Huddersfd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Black and Mr. Dalziel.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, AugustusHenryEden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. HughO.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hon. SirH.
Austin, Sir John
Bagot, Capt. JoscelineFitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, RtHnGeraldW. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, SirFrederickGeorge
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barry, Sir Francis T (Windsor)
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, RtHn. SirMichaelHicks
Bentinck, Lord Henry C
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F. (Middlesex
Bowles, T. Gibson (King'sLynn
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, SirAlex. H. (Shropsh.)
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George

Campbell,Rt.Hn.J.A.(Glasgow
Campbell,J.H.M.(DublinUniv.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Chamberlain,Rt.Hon.J. (Birm.
Chamberlain,RtHn.J.A.(Worc.
Chamberlayne, T. (S'thampton
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dixon-Hartland,SirFredDixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Dyke, Rt.Hn.Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fellowes,RtHn.AilwynEdward
Fergusson,Rt.Hn.SirJ.(Manc'r
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, SirR.B.(Inv'rn'ssB'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Fitzroy, Hon.EdwardAlgernon
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S(Warwick,S.W
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Godson,SirAugustusFrederick
Gordon,Hn.J.E.(Elgin&Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon,MajEvans (T'rH'mlets
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir JohnEldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Grenfell, William Henry
Gunter, Sir Robert
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hain, Edward
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton,Marq.of(L'nd'nderry
Hardy,Laurence(Kent,Ashford
Harris,F.Leverton(Tynem'th)
Harris,Dr.Fredk.R.(Dulwich)
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard(Hanley
Heath,SirJames(Staffords.NW
Helder, Augustus
Henderson,SirA.(Stafford,W.)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse,RtHnH.(Somers't,E
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope,J.F.(Sheffield,Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Howard,John(Kent,Faversham
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier,Hon.JamesHenryCecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Kennaway,Rt.Hon.SirJohnH.
Kenyon, Hon.Geo.T.(Denbigh)
Kerr, John
Kimber, Sir Henry
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lambert, George
Lambton, Hon.FrederickWm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew, Bonar (Glasgow
Lawrence,SirJoseph(Monm'th)
Lawson,JohnGrant(YorksN.R.
Lee,ArthurH.(Hants.,Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower,Frederick N.S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Col.CharlesW.(Evesham
Long,Rt.Hn.Walter(Bristol,S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas,ReginaldJ.(Portsmouth)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver,Sir Lewis (EdinburghW
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell,RtHn.SirH.E.(Wigt'n
Maxwell,W.J.H.(Dumfriesshire
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore,JohnThrogmorton
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milner,Rt.Hon.SirFrederickG.
Milvain, Thomas
Mitchell,Edw.(Fermanagh,N.)
Mitchell, William (Burnley)
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hon.J.Scott(Hants.)
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Pease, Herbert Pike(Darlington
Percy, Earl
Perks, Robert William
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington,Colonel Richard
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederick Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Ritchie,Rt.Hon.Chas.Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos.Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Shaw-Stewart,SirH.(Renfrew)
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, Abel H.(Hertford,East)
Smith,RtHnJ.Parker(Lanarks
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich
Stanley,EdwardJas.(Somerset)
Stanley,Rt.Hon.Lord(Lancs.)
Stewart,SirMarkJ.M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell Sir John M.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot,Rt.Hn.J.G.(Oxf'dUniv.
Taylor,Austin (East Toxteth)
Thompson,Dr.EC (Monagh'n.N
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond,Rt.Hn.SirWilliam.H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Wason,JohnCathcart(Orkney)
Welby,Lt.-Col.A.C.E.(Taunton
Welby,SirCharlesG.E.(Notts.)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und.Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord,
Wills,ArthurWalters(N.Dorset
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd,SirW.H.(Yorks.)
Wodehouse,Rt.Hn.E.R.(Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton) rose to move an Amendment to leave out of the clause the words "one thousand nine hundred and ten" in order to insert the words "until Parliament shall otherwise determine."

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY rose to a point of order. He said the effect of this Bill was to provide for the payment of money out of taxation for four years, and his hon. friend seemed to him to propose to extend that for time immemorial. He did not mean "time immemorial," but indefinitely. He wanted to know whether it was in order for any hon. Member to propose in this way an extension of taxation.

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN said the Act had been extended from year to year, and there was no question of adding to taxation raised by the Amendment.

MR. LAMBERT said he did not propose that the original Act should be continued for time immemorial, but only suggested that it should be continued until Parliament should otherwise determine, which was a considerable difference. It seemed to him that no useful purpose was served by making this Bill a temporary measure, so that it should lapse in 1910. It was perfectly obvious to anybody who had followed this debate that it was intended by both sides of the House that the subject of the reorganisation of rural rating should be thoroughly overhauled, and the basis of taxation put upon a more just foundation than it was at present. He thought that when that time came it would be impossible to withdraw from the agriculturist the relief which was granted by the Act of 1896. Whatever view might have been taken of the Act at that time of its passage it had been in operation for nine years, and it was now impossible, without putting some equivalent in its place, to withdraw the £1,330,000 which now passed to agriculturists under it, and to increase the rating of land to more than half its value. The President of the Local Government Board had said that two conditions were necessary for dealing with the question of local taxation. The first was an overflowing Exchequer and the second a Parliament with plenty of leisure. Could they ensure that those conditions would prevail in 1910? If they could not, what was the use of allowing the Bill to lapse automatically in that year? Since the original Bill was passed in 1896, a Royal Commission on Local Taxation had been appointed, and had reported in favour of this relief being continued in the agricultural interest. At all events he thought the Government would not dispute the fact that it was their intention when they appointed that Commission to deal with the whole subject of rural rating. They had not done so and he very much regretted it.

The first thing they would have to do would be to give a uniform system of valuing all over the country. That would take very nearly a session, and then a review of the question of rural rating would take another session. The present Chief Secretary for Ireland stated very clearly in 1901 that the position was not the same as it was in 1896. It was trebly accentuated now. In 1896 they were dealing with an Interim Report, and now they had the complete Report of the Royal Commission. Out of fifteen members thirteen reported that the case of agricultural land must be considered. The right hon. Gentleman went on to say that it was the hope and desire of the Government to deal with the whole question, but it was obvious that the Government had not dealt with the question and therefore he did not see any reason why this Bill should lapse in 1910. If the Bill was just and politic in 1896 it was doubly more so now. The rates all over the country had increased since 1896. In the county of Devonshire the education rate was now treble what it was in 1896, and in other ways there had been an increase. Therefore the land would, if this Act were repealed, have to bear a greater share of taxation than it did in 1896.

But there was one other reason, and he thought it was a very strong one, why this Bill should not be allowed to lapse in 1910. When the Act of 1896 was passed there was no equivalent grant to Ireland, but by the Irish Local Government Act of 1898 there was now more than an equivalent grant. Ireland by that Local Government Act received a grant far and away in excess of the sum granted under the original Act. The grant to Ireland amounted to £730,000 a year, and that was given to Ireland permanently and nobody had ever dreamed of withdrawing it. The grant to Ireland was for the relief of rates on agricultural land, and, it being made permanent, it would be an obvious injustice to the rural ratepayer in England if the relief to him should drop in 1910 unless, indeed, a parallel course was pursued in regard to Ireland. On the Second Reading of the Bill a good many arguments were adduced and a good many statements made as to the defects of the measure. He did not want to go into the subject in that way at all. It was sufficient to say that the Bill was rather severely riddled at the time it came before the House. His contention was that from the agricultural point of view this Bill was better than nothing, and therefore he hoped it would not be allowed to lapse until Parliament passed something in its place. If the Bill were allowed to lapse in 1910 or at any time without the question of rating being dealt with, the confusion which would result would be enormous. He did not think that anybody understood what enormous complications there would be, because the farmers who were paying the rent would suddenly have their rates increased, not only by the large increase which had taken place by their growth since the Act was passed, but they would lose the remission of half of them which the statute provided for. For these reasons he thought that, although this Act should not be made a permanent one, it should not be repealed until Parliamen had thoroughly dealt with the question of rating. He therefore moved the Amendment which stood in his name.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 6, to leave out the words 'one thousand nine hundred and ten' and insert the words 'until Parliament shall otherwise determine.' "—(*Mr. Lambert.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'one thousand nine hundred and' stand part of the clause."

Mr. Lambert.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said that on one point at all events he might congratulate the hon. Member who had moved the Amendment. He meant the very extraordinary change of sentiments which had taken place among hon. Gentlemen opposite which had made it possible that such an Amendment as this could be moved from the benches opposite. He quite agreed that some hon. Gentlemen had been quite consistent in this matter, but he thought that the action which had been taken on the other side of the House showed great inconsistency. It was only necessary to recall one sentence of a speech by the Leader of the Opposition in 1896 in describing this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman said it was selfish, it was unjust, the reasons for it were inexplicable, and that if it were passed it would be perilous in its consequences. After a declaration of that sort, one did not expect to have the spectacle of an hon. Member from those benches rising to move that a Bill so described should be made permanent, or at least should be permanent until Parliament should otherwise determine. He thought that such a circumstance was an eloquent description of the very remarkable change which had come over the Liberal Party.

MR. DALZIEL: The hon. Member does not speak for the Liberal Party.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said the Government had of course had to ask themselves what attitude they should take in connection with this Amendment, and to the principle of it they could take no exception. In 1896 the Government introduced the original statute as a permanent measure, but to conciliate hon. Gentlemen opposite its duration was reduced to five years. Again, when the first Continuance Act was introduced in 1901 it was proposed to make the measure permanent, and the duration was again reduced to four years. Again, on the present occasion, the Government had introduced a temporary instead of a permanent Bill in order to conciliate Opposition. The history of the whole question showed that the Government would have preferred to have the Bill worded in the sense of the hon. Member's Amendment. After all that had been said, it must be admitted that it would be necessary to continue these Acts until some more comprehensive system had been devised and carried through the House. But if, unfortunately, that proved to be impossible, whatever Government might be in office, before 1910, he was as certain as he stood there that this Continuance Act would have to be renewed. Therefore, it might save time to make the Act permanent. But, on the other side, he remembered that the Government had introduced the Bill as a temporary measure, and that it passed the Second Reading on the understanding that it was to be a temporary measure. The Amendment, therefore, was one which it would have been clearly improper for the Government themselves to introduce. Such an Amendment ought not to have the weight of the Government's authority thrown on its side, and the view of the Government, therefore, was that the question should be left to the decision of the Committee. [Cries of "Oh" from the OPPOSITION benches.] The Government did not desire to influence the votes of their supporters for or against this Amendment. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh" and "Report progress."]

*SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said that the extraordinary speech which the Committee had just heard announced a most astounding breach of faith which deserved the prompt attention of the House. Here was a Bill introduced as a temporary measure and raising a most controversial question—controversial as raising a variety of other questions beyond the simple agricultural aspect of the case—which he might say in passing was not the most important part. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford, who had championed the original Bill in 1896, had laid stress on the fact that the Bill was a temporary one; it was to be only in force pending the result of a future inquiry by a Royal Commission. The right hon. Gentleman then admitted the force of the arguments used by the late Sir William Harcourt and himself that there was as great a grievance in the urban districts as in the agricultural districts; and admitted the principle that the Bill was to be for only a limited period. After a long fight the House accepted the measure on the understanding that it would come again under the cognisance of Parliament when the Royal Commission had reported. He thought the way in which the Government had treated the Report of that Commission was not the least significant of many of their proceedings during the last nine years. That Report was a most able dealing with the whole question of local taxation; but, after it was presented, it was practically flung upon the scrap-heap by the Government. It had served their purpose; and so far as the present Government was concerned they had left out of sight all consideration for any other class in the community except the one class benefited by this Bill. He held that our system of local taxation was wholly indefensible. The whole burden was thrown on one kind of property, which was most unfair. If the question of local taxation was allowed to remain in abeyance much longer it would be a public scandal, no matter what Government was in power. The Government now proposed that by this Bill their temporary Act should be extended for a short period. His hon. friend the Member for South Molton—who in no way represented the Opposition, but who had been a consistent supporter of the Bill—proposed an Amendment to make the Act perpetual. The Government were pledged to the lips not to accept such an Amendment, and yet the right hon. Gentleman turned round and asked his supporters to vote for it—for that was the effect of saying that the Government Whips would not be put on and that the Conservative Party were to vote freely. The action was most un-Parliamentary and without parallel, and he moved, therefore, that Progress be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress and ask leave to sit again."—(*Sir Henry Fowler.*)

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.) asked whether the merits of the Question could be discussed on this Motion, and whether he would be in order in replying to the impassioned oration of the right hon. Gentleman.

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: No, I am afraid not. I have put the Question of progress, and the debate must be curtailed to that.

MR. DILLON: Was not the speech of the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton an argument in favour of reporting Progress?

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: The right hon. Gentleman made his speech on the Amendment before the House. [OPPOSITION cries of "No!"]

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: I rose at once to make a charge of breach of faith against the Government, and I repeat that now. We are surely entitled to a reply from the Prime Minister.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope the right hon. Gentleman does not suggest that I am not anxious to give him a reply.

MR. DILLON: I beg to point out that the speech from beginning to end was an indictment of the action of the Government and not addressed to the Amendment.

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: I am quite clear on the question. The right hon. Gentleman made his speech on the Amendment before the House. There was no other Question before the House, and now that he has moved to report Progress the discussion must be confined to that.

MR. CHAPLIN: The right hon. Gentleman made an appeal to me, and in one sense made an attack upon me. In various of his statements he was absolutely incorrect. Shall I be allowed to reply?

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: If the right hon. Member withdraws his Motion speeches can be made on the Amendment before the House. [OPPOSITION cries of "No!"]

MR. DILLON: On a point of order, may I say that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton's speech was altogether direct to the Motion which he has moved, that Progress be reported. That Motion is now before the House and surely the Leader of the House ought to reply to the speech which was made in moving to report Progress.

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: I did not know that the right hon. Gentleman was going to move to report Progress. I thought his speech was directed to the Amendment.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he presumed that it would be allowable on a Motion to report Progress for the Leader of the House to reply to the allegations made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton of improper conduct on the part of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport): On the point of order, Mr. Deputy-Chairman, after your ruling, might I ask what would be in order?

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: It is quite in order to discuss the conduct of the Government in having given their approval to this Amendment.

MR. EMMOTT: Have the Government given their approval?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said he understood that what the Deputy-Chairman had laid down was that it would be improper to discuss whether this were a good or a bad Amendment, but that it would be in order to discuss whether the Government had committed anything in the nature of a breach of faith or of dereliction of duty in saying they would leave this an open question; and he should, therefore, abstain altogether from the discussion of whether the Amendment ought to be accepted or not. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton had told them that, in his opinion, this was a breach of faith—a violation of a pledge; but he was at a loss to know when the pledge was given, or in what the alleged breach of faith consisted. While the right hon. Gentleman in his speech, addressed, he presumed, solely to that purpose, dragged in all sorts of topics which, in his (Mr. Balfour's) opinion, were not relevant, he omitted to touch a matter which was relevant, viz., what was the character of the pledge he said they had violated ?—what was that pledge ?

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: When you introduced the Bill and took the Second Reading, it passed, if not without a division, at all events practically with the support of a large section of the House upon the faith of the allegation that the Bill was of a temporary character. Your action in accepting this Amendment reverses that intention. That is the pledge which was given and which I complain is being broken.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said the right hon. Gentleman declared that it was a breach of faith to alter a temporary Bill into a permanent one in Committee. If that were so, then he presumed it would also be a breach of faith to alter a Bill from a permanent into a temporary one. But twice they had done this. Let them be perfectly clear what was meant by the allegation of breach of faith.

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY: What about the borough Members who are not here to-night ?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said he failed to see that that had anything to do with the alleged breach of faith. The accusation made was that the Bill having been introduced as a temporary measure was being turned into one of a permanent character, and he asked whether it would not equally be a breach of faith to introduce a Bill as a permanent measure and turn it into a temporary one. [Cries of "No, no!"] The right hon. Member for Wolverhampton seemed to think it was a matter of enormous importance whether the Bill were temporary or permanent, but personally he did not think it was, either from the point of view of those who liked or of those who disliked the Bill. The truth was a Bill of this kind was quite certain to be renewed unless a general reform, a much needed and desired reform, of local taxation was meanwhile brought in, in which case, of course, this Bill would be supplanted and would not be required. This Bill, in their opinion, was an act of justice to a particular class, and it did not affect to be a general solution of the rating question, which was one of the most difficult and complex of problems and one which appeared to him, the more he studied it, to become more difficult and complex. It had been brought prominently before their notice by a recent debate in the House, and he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman in thinking that matters were approaching something in the nature of a scandal; but this was no reason in the world why a Bill which he believed to affect a just reform, as far as it went, should not be either made permanent or renewed from time to time, as he did not doubt it would be, until the general reform was brought in. Therefore, the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton was wholly without warrant, was based upon no argument whatever, and was quite uncalled for. If they thought the Bill was likely to be dropped when its term came to an end, he could only remind them of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition on the Second Reading. He tried to get out of the difficulty in which he and his friends had placed themselves by their violent opposition to the measure in the first instance and by the calmness with which they had accepted its present renewal, and he said that when a scheme of this kind was once in operation it must go on; they could not drop it; it was sure to go on; they had to accept the fact and make the best of it; and they assented to its renewal. This argument would, of course, be used every time the Bill came on for renewal, should it be found necessary to again renew it in the absence of general legislation. He should, however, regard it as a great public calamity if a period of four years should again elapse without the House having either the time or the opportunity to deal with this complicated and thorny question of general justice in our rating system, and if the House did indeed take up this duty, as he hoped it would, then whether this measure were temporary or permanent in form it would certainly come to an end. The sooner they were able to place upon the Statute-book a general scheme which would introduce order into the chaos, and justice into the anomalies, which now affected almost every part of the rating system of the country the better.

SIR JAMES JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street) said he was perfectly in harmony with the hon. Member for Wolverhampton in charging the Government with a breach of faith. This was the third time this Bill had been introduced as a temporary measure.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, I have stated that the Bill was introduced as a permanent measure on both previous occasions.

SIR JAMES JOICEY, proceeding, said that the Government had not introduced it as a permanent measure on this occasion, and therefore they presumed it was not the intention of the Government to make it permanent. When the Bill passed its First and Second Reading it was passed as a temporary measure. The House and the Opposition believed this to be so; had this not been the case it would have received most strenuous opposition on the part of those opposed to the principle of the Bill. The Government secured the Second Reading pledged to this being a temporary measure, and he could not understand anyone defending the Government in taking such action as it was now doing. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, who was in charge of the Bill, wanted to shuffle off and leave it an open question, whilst he intended his followers to make it a permanent measure.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR dissented, saying that making it an open question meant that they left their supporters to vote as they thought best.

SIR JAMES JOICEY asked how would the Government vote.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said he personally should not vote.

Mr. A. J. Balfour.

MR. DALZIEL: Running away again?

SIR JAMES JOICEY thought things were coming to a pretty pass when the Government introduced a Government measure, and the Minister in charge of it said they were not going to make it a Party question, but were going to leave it to their supporters to do as they thought best, and that he would not vote at all. A more extraordinary position he had never seen during his whole twenty years experience in this House. The right hon. Gentleman might think he would deceive the country, but he would not. The Leader of the Opposition would never have advised his followers not to oppose the Act if it had been a permanent measure; and this attempt of the Government to get it made permanent was a most mean one. For his part he should give it his strongest opposition.

MR. CHAPLIN said that when any charge of breach of faith was brought against the Government, those who made it ought to be fully informed as to the facts. The right hon. Gentleman opposite and his friends were wrong in saying that this Act had always been treated as a temporary measure. Both when originally introduced and upon its renewal five years afterwards it was brought forward as a permanent measure, and there was absolutely no foundation for the charge of breach of faith against his right hon. friend. It was true that on both occasions changes were made in Committee for reasons stated at the time, and hon. Gentlemen opposite ought to be the last persons in the world to raise the difficulties they were now raising. The whole afternoon they had been clamouring for the reduction of the period of the Bill by two years——

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN reminded the right hon. Gentleman that the question before the Committee was a Motion to report Progress.

MR. CHAPLIN said he was giving reasons for not reporting Progress. Hon. Gentlemen opposite had been declaring all the afternoon that if the measure was made temporary it would be impossible to deal with the question until the period of the Act had expired, thereby expressing the desire that it should be made permanent.

MR. ASQUITH (Fifeshire, E.) quite agreed that when charges of breach of faith were made they should be based on accurate information, but the right hon. Gentleman opposite had said nothing in his remarks to minimise the gravity of the charge or to show in any way that it was unfounded. According to the right hon. Gentleman's own confession the original Bill was introduced as a permanent measure, but in order to get it through the House the concession was made that it should be only a temporary measure. Then when its first term of currency was expiring, the measure was reintroduced as a permanent proposal, and again for the purpose of obtaining the assent of the House it was given a temporary character. Therefore, so far as the Bill had ever been an Act it had been nothing but a purely temporary measure, and the Second Reading of the Bill this year was obtained on the assumption and the express understanding that it was to have the same temporary character as the two Acts which had preceded it. But what, after all, was the description the Government themselves had given of the measure? In the King's Speech they announced their intention of introducing Bills "for the renewal of the Agricultural Rates Act and other temporary Acts." It was therefore distinguished from other proposals as a renewal of a temporary measure. How under these circumstances the Government could affect to treat it as an open question passed his comprehension, and he thought his right hon. friend was perfectly entitled to take the sense of the House upon his Motion.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES thought hon. Gentlemen opposite hardly realised the position in which they were placing themselves or the claim they were making. An Amendment moved from the other side of the House had been favourably—perhaps too favourably—received by the Minister in charge of the Bill, and their claim really was that no Minister should be allowed to accept an Amendment, however reasonable, moved by his opponents. The President of the Local Government Board, while recognising that the Bill was introduced as a temporary measure, saw no objection in principle to the Amendment moved by an hon. Member opposite. Was he, therefore, to array the whole forces of the Government against what he considered to be a reasonable proposal? Was the right course to make a violent speech against it and call all the forces of the Government into the lobby against it. He thought not. Whether the right hon. Gentleman had taken the most prudent course was another point. The Prime Minister said he would leave the Amendment to the House. He wished the Government would always take that course and leave the decision to the House without putting on the Party Whips, whenever they saw certain merits in an Amendment. He had risen to say that he thought it was very unfortunate that hon. and right hon. Members opposite should accuse the Government of a breach of faith because they had shown a readiness to accept an Amendment proposed by an hon. Member opposite.

MR. BLAKE (Longford, S.) said that upon this question differences were fundamental, particularly with reference to the concrete question which they had before them. The renewal of this Act was a question which ought to be kept within the control of the House of Commons, because the landlords' House would have the determination of the question whether it should remain perpetual. So long as the Act remained a temporary one so long they would know that those who opposed it would have an opportunity of taking the sense of the House of Commons effectively upon the question whether it should continue in force or not; but the moment they made it a perpetual measure they would place it beyond the power of the House of Commons and hand it over to the House which was most interested in the question, namely, the House of Lords, whose consent would be necessary to repeal it. In the past there had been an abortive attempt made to introduce this Bill as a permanent measure, but the Government gave up attempting to make it permanent and proposed it as a temporary Bill. The House of Commons had twice insisted upon this Bill being converted from a permanent to a temporary measure, and upon the third occasion the Second Reading was obtained upon the understanding that it was to be temporary. To make it permanent would be to remove the greatest lever that existed in favour of that effort, which all sides agreed ought to be made, to alter the whole basis and reorganise the whole system of rating. So long as the measure remained temporary they acknowledged that there ought to be a complete solution and they had a lever, and power, and inducement, and some compulsion, to bring to bear on whatever Government might be in power to undertake that difficult task; but when they removed that lever by making the measure permanent they postponed the redress of that grievance which everybody agreed existed, and which they were unanimous in believing ought to be remedied.

MR. MILDMAY (Devonshire, Totnes) said he thought the right hon. Gentleman was under a misapprehension. The Amendment proposed by the hon. Member for South Molton was merely an indication that the Bill was to be a temporary expedient. He was voting for a temporary expedient until a larger measure of local taxation reform was introduced. There were a great many Members on that side of the House who would not vote for the Amendment for one moment if they thought that the Bill was anything but a temporary expedient. They only wanted justice for the agriculturists, and they were convinced that this Bill would give it to them.

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY said it was perfectly true that the Bill as originally introduced in 1896 was permanent in its character, but in its passage through that House it was altered to a temporary measure. And why? The reason for that alteration was the pressure put upon the Government by their own supporters who were borough Members. He took an active part in opposing that Bill, and a full score of borough Members came to him upon its introduction and informed him that in their judgment it was an unfair and unjust Bill for the boroughs, and they said that unless the Government could see their way to introduce a temporary clause they would join with him in opposing it. It was a wrong action on the part of the Government at the present time, without any notification to the large band of their borough supporters, practically to accept this Amendment. They should have had warning of what was going to happen. His right hon. friend had informed the House that if the Bill were passed as a permanent measure it would require the assent of another place in order to repeal it. It was possible that the financial clause might be repealed by the Finance Bill, but the first clause could never be repealed without the assent of the House of Lords. He appealed to Members and especially to the London representatives, whose constituents were already being charged the equivalent of a 3d in the £1 rate in order to make good the funds necessary for carrying out that Act, to say whether it was fair of the Government to spring this mine upon them without due notification, and to make the Act a permanent measure. He would suggest to the Prime Minister and to the President of the Local Government Board that it was not fair to their own constituencies to act in this manner. Would it not be an error in tactics on the part of the Government to oppose this Motion? Let the matter be well considered by every Member of the House, and then if, after the lapse of a week, they were in favour of the measure being made permanent it would be a different thing altogether.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said that all difficulty would be got rid of if the hon. Member for South Molton would withdraw his Amendment, which, he assured the Committee, the Government did not wish to press upon him. It was a bomb thrown from the other side of the House. There were many hon. Gentlemen on that side who would like this to be a permanent measure, and many who would not like it. The hon. Gentleman who had thrown this apple of discord into their midst was evidently regarded by all his own friends as having suddenly raised a question of which they had had no notice, although it was down on the Paper, and if he withdrew the Amendment they might resume in tranquillity the further consideration of the measure.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER said the Government had been in favour of the principle contained in this Amendment. The Bill had been described in the King's Speech as a "temporary measure." [Cries of "No."] Yes, that was so. It was stated that the Agricultural Rates Act, and other temporary measures, were to be renewed. The renewal of temporary measures did not mean that they were to be made permanent by any possible twisting of words. The hon. Member for South Molton had always disagreed with the whole of his Party on this question—[An Hon. Member: No!]—and he believed he was quite alone to-day in the position he had taken up, just as he had very often been alone before. The Government were at one time in favour of the principle of this Amendment, but they deserted it under pressure from the borough Members. Now when the proposal came from the Opposition side of the House it was to be accepted when the borough Members were not there. When the Opposition accepted the Bill on the Second Reading it was understood on both sides of the House that in Committee only technical alterations would be made. It was certainly not understood that the great alteration which the Amendment would involve was going to be made without the House of Commons having notice about it. He put it to the Prime Minister's sense of fairness not to press the matter further that day. He supported the Motion to report Progress. He was speaking in the interests of agriculture and he hoped the Motion to report Progress would be carried. He believed the Government were under quite a misapprehension as to the opinion of their own followers on this question.

Lord EDMUND FITZMAURICE said he wished to submit a point in support of the suggestion made by the Prime Minister in order to get the Committee out of the difficulty. If the Amendment were adopted it would make this Act of Parliament permanent; and this was how the Courts would have to interpret it:—Clause 1 of the Act of 1901 would read as follows: "The period of the continuance of the Agricultural Rates Act of 1896 is hereby extended until the 31st day of March until Parliament otherwise determine." Now, that was absolute nonsense. The hon. Member for South Molton moved his Amendment in the wrong place.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.) thought that some other course should be adopted from that suggested by the Prime Minister. The Deputy-Chairman should rule that the Amendment was out of order because it would not read in with the Act of 1896. He thought the Prime Minister must feel some hesitation in carrying the point further when he considered the position of the borough Members of the House. It was said that the proposal now made was a breach of faith. Ten years ago it was promised that the case of the great cities in regard to rating should be considered in the time to come. The time to come had come and the case had not been considered. There never was a case of so much urgency for reporting Progress in order to let the outside public understand what was being done by this Act being made permanent. It was perfectly unprecedented that the President of the Local Government Board, who was in charge of the Bill, and whose duty it was to advise the House, could not advise them when the case was not clear.

*The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: The noble Lord has asked me a point of order. The Amendment has come in the wrong place and it makes nonsense of the original Act, without some additional words.

Mr. DALZIEL said that the debate they had had was a most interesting object-lesson of the manner in which the House was led; and he thought the statement which the Deputy-Chairman had just made was sufficient to induce the Committee to register their votes to report Progress. The Amendment of the hon. Member for South Molton was moved in a very small House, with very few Members—almost half-a-dozen—on that side; and he maintained that the attitude which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had taken was not proceeding fairly, inasmuch as he seemed to regard the alteration of the whole character of the Bill as a minor matter. In the first place, it was unfair, because he brought forward the Bill as a temporary measure in order to get a Second Reading for it; in the second place, he got it into Committee as a temporary measure, knowing that scores of Members who voted for the Second Reading of the Bill would have been there that afternoon to vote against altering it from a temporary to a permanent measure. The right hon. Gentleman got the Second Reading under false pretences, because he must have known that at that moment the Government were willing to alter the whole character of the Bill. They all knew the reason of the change. The right hon. Gentleman had been "nobbled"—not for the first time—by the right hon. Member for Sleaford.

MR. CHAPLIN was understood to dissent.

MR. DALZIEL: Yes. The right hon. Gentleman knew how near he was to the truth.

MR. CHAPLIN was again understood to dissent.

MR. DALZIEL said that if the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford would say that he did not know that the Government were going to treat this Amendment of the hon. Member for South Molton as an open question he would withdraw his remark. The right hon. Gentleman remained silent. Many hon. Members knew it. The hon. Member for South Molton knew it; but it was kept a secret. Why were these secret conclaves held? This decision was to be taken in a small House in consequence of private discussions and arrangements. He said that to take such a course was not treating the Committee with proper respect, and they ought, he thought, to protest against the shabby treatment of the Government in taking off their Whips in regard to this matter. Did any Member of the Committee ever hear of such a condition of things as a Minister in charge of a Bill running out when a division was called, and, having his own opinion on the subject, not coming forward to express it. He did not know whether the Prime Minister thought he was going to save the time of the House by taking this sort of course. The right hon. Gentleman could have had the whole Bill two hours ago but for this, and he thought they ought to protest against the Government's action.

MR. DILLON said the Chairman's ruling was an absolutely unanswerable argument in favour of reporting Progress. What had occurred was an unprecedented thing in the history of the House of Commons. Here was a Minister leading the House in regard to a Bill of his Department, and here was an Amendment which had been on the Paper for days, if not a week, and the Minister got up and announced in a solemn speech that he was going to leave it an open question, and after wasting an hour of the time of the House they found they were talking about a nonsensical Amendment all the time. The Minister in charge of the Bill apparently never took the trouble to examine the Notice Paper and satisfy himself that this Amendment was sensible. [AN HON. MEMBER: It is not the first time that the House has done it.] Quite so; it was not the first time that the House had done it, but it was the first time that a Leader of the House, and a Minister in charge of a Bill, had accepted an Amendment which was nonsense. He would not blame the President of the Local Government Board if this had been an Amendment sprung upon the Committee, because it was not very easy all of a sudden to tell whether an Amendment fitted in the Bill. When, however, an Amendment had been on the Paper for a week the matter was different. In this case not much labour was involved in examining the Notice Paper as there were only three Amendments to this Bill. Yet the Minister in charge of the Bill could not find out whether the Amendment was sensible or not. Under these circumstances he supported the Motion to report Progress in order to give the President of the Local Government Board time to study the Amendment.

MR. KEARLEY thought they were entitled to ask the Minister in charge of the Bill to have the other Amendment on the Paper properly examined so that the House of Commons might be prevented from making itself extremely foolish. They had wasted a couple of hours on this Amendment, and it seemed an extraordinary thing that the right hon. Gentleman should stand up and debate an Amendment when he had not discovered whether the Amendment was sensible or not.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 170; Noes, 219. (Division List No. 155.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Benn, John Williams
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Delany, William
Devlin, Ch. Ramsay (Galway)
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dillon, John
Dobbie, Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Edwards, Frank
Ellice, Capt E C (S. Andrw's Bghs
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Findlay, Alexander (L'na'k, NE
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Gilhooly, James
Grant, Corrie
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hammond, John
Harrington, Timothy
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Fadden, Edward
M'Kean, John
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh, N.)
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Moss, Samuel
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Nussey, Thomas Wilans
O'brien James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Parrott, William
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Slack, John Bamford
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R. (Northants
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Thomas, J A (Glamorgan, Gower
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wills, Arthur Walters (N. Dorset
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Herbert Gladstone and Mr. Causton.

NOES.

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Austin, Sir John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A.J.(Manch'r
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W(Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R.(Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barry, Sir Francis T.(Windsor)
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Bond, Edward
Bowles, T. Gibson(King'sLynn
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Glasgow
Campbell, J. H. M.(Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V.C. W.(Derbyshire
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A.(Worc.
Chamberlayne, T. (S'thampton
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fellowes, Rt Hn. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J(Manc'r
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B.(Inv'rn'ss B'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S.(Warwick, S.W.
Gordon, Hn. J. E.(Elgin&Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon, Maj Evans (T'rH'mlets
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Gunter, Sir Robert
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Marq. of(L'nd'nderry
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Harris, F. Leverton(Tynem'th)
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Heath, Sir James (Staffords NW
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.)
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F.(Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, John(Kent, Faversham
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Kerr, John
Kimber, Sir Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson, John Grant(Yorks N.R
Lee, Arthur H.(Hants., Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Col. Charles W (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis(Edinburgh, W
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E.(Wigt'n
Maxwell, W. J. H (Dumfriesshire
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir Frederick G.
Milvain, Thomas
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, David J.(Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Samuel, Sir Harry S(Limehouse
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Shaw-Stewart, Sir H.(Renfrew)
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, H. C(North'mb. Tyneside
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Edward Jas.(Somerset)
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G.(Oxf'd Univ.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Sir Charles G. E.(Notts.)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord

Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)	Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson	TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)	Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart	
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks.)	Wrightson, Sir Thomas	
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)	Wylie, Alexander	
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm	Younger, William	

Question again proposed, "That the words 'one thousand nine hundred and' stand part of the clause."

And, it being after half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

EVENING SITTING.

ROYAL HIBERNIAN ACADEMY, ETC.

MR. MOONEY (Dublin County, S.) said those who knew Ireland at the present time knew that a great revival was taking place there; that a new spirit had been created amongst the people of Ireland by awakening them to the beauties of their old language and literature, and their ancient position amongst the artistic nations of the world. It was his hope that this spirit might be properly developed, and that by interesting the people in these things at home, emigration, the worst curse of Ireland, might be stopped. The question of the nurture of art was one which nearly every civilised Government in Europe had recognised to be the duty of the State. That was the policy long acknowledged and acted upon in England, Scotland, and Wales with success. The English Government had officially recognised this feeling as far back as 1858, when the Treasury in a Minute defined the position. That Treasury Minute had been largely acted on in England, Scotland, and Wales, but in Ireland the matter had been treated in a very different manner. Let them take the case of Scotland alone and compare it with that of Ireland, and the House would see the enormous difference in the treatment of this question in Scotland and in Ireland.

In Scotland and in Ireland there were two separate art institutions. In Scotland there was the National Gallery and the Royal Scottish Academy. In Ireland there was the National Gallery and the Royal Hibernian Academy. The point to which he desired to address himself that evening was the treatment of modern art in Ireland and Scotland, and the moment this question came to be discussed they were met by this curious difference between the two countries, namely, that, although Scottish Members had over and over again alleged that the position of modern art in Scotland was not satisfactory, the position there was far and away better than, and not to be compared with, the position of modern art in Ireland. The Royal Scottish Academy was derived from three different sources. It derived its establishment and buildings from the Corporation of Edinburgh, it got a grant from the Scottish public funds, and a grant also from the Imperial Treasury. The modern side of art in Ireland was established by the Royal Hibernian Academy, which was itself established in 1826. That Academy had no grant whatever from any public fund. In 1826 a solicitor of Dublin named Johnson bequeathed his establishment and its buildings to the Royal Hibernian Academy, and the latest valuation taken of the buildings was £7,000. That, however, was at a time when its value had not declined so much as it had now, and to bring that valuation up to date it would be necessary to reduce it by half. That was the way in which the Scottish and the Irish Academies were founded. It might be said that the National Gallery in Ireland was extremely well off; he did not dispute it, but the Treasury Minute of 1858 laid it down that the two things should go on side by side; that when an establishment was set up for ancient art an establishment should also be set up for the accommodation of modern art. For some extraordinary reason which they had not been able to discover, that system, so far as Ireland was concerned, had not been followed, but had been deliberately set aside, so much so that some years ago an attempt was made by the Irish Local Government Board to suppress the Royal Hibernian Academy altogether, and so strangle the modern side of art institutions in Ireland.

The Royal Scottish Academy in 1902 came to the House and complained that even with the endowments that they had they were not in a proper position to carry on the artistic education of the nation, and asked that a further grant should be made, and for an inquiry upon two points. They said, first, that the site was not a sufficiently good site for the establishment and was not sufficiently large for the Academy school, and, secondly, that the endowment was not sufficient for the purposes of the schools teaching modern art. The Chancellor of the Exchequer of that day appointed a Committee to inquire into the fact whether the site of the Royal Scottish Academy was a fit and proper one, and secondly whether the administration was as efficient as it might be. That Committee reported that certain grants ought to be made from the Treasury to bring the Royal Scottish Academy up to date, and that the site was not in their opinion a proper site for an institution which was doing so much good work for the artistic benefit of the nation. The terms of his Motion went no further than that. It only asked that the Secretary of the Treasury would appoint a Commission to inquire into the fact whether it was not necessary to give Ireland a new site for the Royal Irish Academy, and whether the grant given was sufficiently large for the purposes of this institution. In 1903 a Bill was brought into this House entitled the Public Offices (Dublin) Bill. That Bill authorised the taking over of a large plot of land in the heart of the city of Dublin to be utilised for public offices. That Bill was referred to a Select Committee of which the hon. Member for Durham was the Chairman. Mr. Thomas Drew, the president of the Royal Hibernian Academy was, among others, examined by the Committee, and gave evidence as to the area which would be necessary for the Royal Hibernian Academy. Nothing was done then, but at the end of the inquiry the Chairman said—

"I think it might go out that the question has come before us, and I should not mind saying myself that it has been shown to be very desirable, if possible, that at all events a better site should be found for the housing of the Royal Hibernian Academy."

Mr. Mooney.

Very little evidence had been necessary to convince that Committee that the present site was not one in which justice could be done to modern art in Ireland.

With regard to the second branch of his Motion he had already read to the House the amount of money which was at the disposal of the Royal Scottish Academy, which was for all purposes an identical institution with the Royal Hibernian Academy. The Royal Scottish Academy had an annual income of about £2,000, the Royal Hibernian Academy an annual income of £50. It was perfectly true that the Treasury gave them £300 a year, but before that sum was given to them they had to bind themselves by resolution to keep up modern schools of art for which they had to pay £250. Did the hon. Member think it right to give the Royal Hibernian Academy £50 to keep up a school for modern art, when in Scotland they got £2,000 for the same purpose, and were not even satisfied with that. The position of affairs was one they could not understand. In Scotland it was laid down that these two things should be going on at the same time, but by one of the secret processes, the working of which they could not get at, the National Gallery in Ireland was given everything, including powers given to the director which in Scotland a director did not possess, and there was an endeavour to strangle the Royal Hibernian Academy.

He wanted also some information from the Secretary of the Treasury with regard to the College of Science. It was the intention of the Government of Ireland to build a new College of Science in Dublin. They had acquired the site, but when it came to the question of appointing an architect to draw the plans for the new college an Englishman was appointed to do the work, while at the same time they went to Scotland for a clerk of works. He thought the Secretary of the Treasury ought to have made a purely Irish job of this. There were many Irish architects who would have drawn equally good if not better plans, and it was not necessary to get the services of either an English architect or a Scotch clerk of works. Ireland objected to undesirable alien immigration just as strongly as England, and, when they had people in Ireland who were as well or better qualified to do the work, they objected to the English and Scotch aliens being imported into the country to take the bread out of Irish mouths. As he had said, they had acquired the site for the new College of Science in one of the best parts of Dublin, and were now going to pull down some of the best old houses in that city and in their place erect the new College of Science. But in the upper part of that building they were going to house, not the College of Science, but a number of clerks from every other Government Department in Ireland, and they were going to put the College of Science in the basement. A portion of the building was also to be devoted to technical instruction, and the director of technical instruction was asked to specify what particular things he wanted. One of the things he asked for was a forge, for which, however, provision was not made, although the architect had made provision for everything else that had been asked for. He would like to know how that was going to be provided now. He would also like to know what the hon. Gentleman intended to do with the building which would be vacated by the College of Science when the new College of Science was built. He would suggest to the hon. Member that there was another institution in Dublin which was at present housed in an outlying portion of the city—the Irish College of Music—which might be housed in that building He begged to move.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.) said he seconded the Motion of his hon. friend, who had shown so conclusively the necessity for it that he had left him very little to say upon the subject. He thought that his hon. friend had made it perfectly clear with regard to the Royal Hibernian Academy that the action of the Treasury in the past had been to cause a real set-back in the development of modern art culture in Ireland. As regarded the endowment of the Royal Hibernian Academy the amount given by the Treasury amounted to only £300 a year, out of which £250 had to go to the keeping up of the free school. The value of the site might be reckoned as equivalent to an extra £200 or £300 a year, but out of that the Academy had to pay its keeper, porter, and other fees of that kind. Making all allowances, the money which the Academy could devote to its maintenance was little over £100 a year, only £50 of which came from Government sources. Moreover, the site was not granted by the Government as was done in the case of London and Scotland. In years past the Academy had sometimes had to depend on voluntary gifts to pay the ordinary honorarium to its President and Secretary. A site was desired near the other Art Institutions in Dublin, and in any proposal that might be made the proper autonomy of the Academy should be preserved. If Irish art was to flourish the Academy must have a free hand. It was further submitted that whatever future arrangements were made the small sum now granted should not be cancelled. These demands were made not only by Nationalist Members, but by every shade of opinion in Ireland, and they had the support of two successive Lords-Lieutenant. It was much to be regretted that the opportunity of providing a suitable site in 1903 was not availed of. It was a curious anomaly that while the National Gallery, the School of Art, the Museum, and the Library were all together, the one institution necessary for the development of art was hidden away on the north side of the city.

In connection with the Royal College of Science a great opportunity was afforded for properly housing the Royal Academy of Music. The cultivation of music in Ireland was growing to a greater extent than at any time during the last fifty years, and the present accommodation of the Academy was altogether inadequate. The great belief in the permanence of the movement for the encouragement of art in Ireland—the language revival, the learning of folk songs and the cultivation of

Irish art in all its phases—rested upon the fact that the movement sprang from the people themselves. He hoped, therefore, the Government would see their way to appoint the Commission asked for, provide a proper site for the Royal Hibernian Academy, and also see that there was no overlapping of functions on the part of the art institutions in Dublin.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, it is necessary in the interest of the development of modern art in Ireland to provide the Royal Hibernian Academy with a new site, and also to appoint a Commission to inquire whether the present system both of endowment and administration of this and other Art and Science Institutions in Ireland is as equitable and efficient as that of similar institutions in Great Britain."—(*Mr. Mooney.*)

Mr. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.) said it was so often the fate of Ulster representatives to differ sharply from Nationalist Members that it was a double pleasure when they found themselves able heartily to agree with them. He had often wondered why it was that Ireland, with all the natural gifts and qualities of her people, was so backward in matters affecting art. The Irish people had the gift of imagination, the romantic poetic temperament, and the love of the beautiful, and yet they had not taken a prominent place in art movements. Ireland had produced great soldiers out of all proportion to other parts of the United Kingdom, and had been prolific in the production of great orators, but she had not produced many great painters. Nor had she produced any really great poet, though there were a number of distinguished Irish poets and a school of Irish poetry which was claiming increased attention. It was commonly said that Ireland could not afford to encourage art. But Scotland, which also was a comparatively poor country, had produced many great artists, though one of the most prominent members of the Glasgow School was really an Irishman. He hoped the Commission, if appointed, would take into consideration the possibility of creating large loan exhibitions which did so much to cultivate a love of art. He heartily welcomed the Resolution and would give it his best support.

Mr. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.) said that as an old citizen of Dublin he could endorse everything which had been said by previous speakers. Everybody who knew the topography of Dublin knew what a shabby and miserable abode the Academy was for one of the principal of the Muses. He wondered the representative of the Treasury did not blush when the net amount of the grant from the Government was named. He hardly agreed with the last speaker that Ireland had not produced some great votaries of painting, but they were by no means indebted to the Government patronage or to the existence of the Royal Hibernian Academy. Hogan, the sculptor, and several others might be named as showing that the Irish people had the imagination, the natural love of art, the romantic disposition, and all those elements which went to uplift a material nation. They did not possess the art of making money, but they only needed fair play to excel almost every other country in Europe in producing modern artists. What was wanted by this Resolution was that the Government should institute an inquiry and provide a proper site. Dublin was rich in public buildings, but they were all built in the time of the Irish Parliament and not since that Parliament had been taken away. He hoped the discussion would lead to something being done, as the Academy at present was a standing reproach to the country. It was not reasonable that such institutions should be practically dependent on charitable subscriptions. £40,000 was given to endow the Scottish Academy. Without wishing to enter into any national rivalry, it had always seemed that Scotland took care of itself in its own quiet way, and, while the Irish were knocking at the door and vociferously demanding help, the Scotchman got in at the back and emptied the purse. As to the Academy of Music, that was wretchedly housed. He trusted that the endowment of that institution would be enlarged, because of all countries in the world Ireland ought to be productive of the greatest musicians and artists. Nothing would so far soothe and generally improve the rather depressed condition of the country as the encouragement and cultivation of music. He asked those at the British Treasury to put their hands in their pockets and give them a proper site for the Royal Academy of Music, and thus carry out the suggestion of the hon. Member for South Dublin. Irishmen believed that justice had not been done to Ireland in this matter, and that no encouragement whatever had been given to art and science in Ireland.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTSON (Hackney, S.), in supporting the Resolution, said that nobody could dispute that the public buildings which had been referred to were not so good as the country was entitled to demand. He considered, however, that the demand for improvement in art and science in Ireland was a modern one. [NATIONALIST cries of "No, no!"] He did not think that it had been an earnest demand until quite recent years. He thought that Ireland was now waking up to the necessity for having the opportunities for acquiring science and art decidedly improved, and he hoped there would be some improvements carried out in the buildings in which science and art were taught. There was no doubt that the public buildings which had been alluded to in Dublin were in a very bad state. Frequently he had taken people up to Dublin when visiting Ireland, and he had always been ashamed of the buildings of the Hibernian Academy. There were some fine buildings in Dublin, but the outside of the public buildings devoted to art were very shabby. A suggestion had been made that some good might be done to Ireland by a loan collection, but in his opinion Ireland was entitled to have such works of its own. He did not think it would be for the benefit of art in the United Kingdom as a whole to have the great national treasures now kept in London moved about from place to place. He thought such a course would distinctly lessen the value of London Museums. If foreigners thought that these valuable treasures were not always kept in London, but were sometimes kept at Edinburgh, Dublin, and other centres, it would do much injury to the London museums.

MR. T. L. CORBETT said he only meant that specimens of some of the great painters should be lent to other parts of the country occasionally, and he had no idea of denuding the London collections.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTSON said that, in his opinion, the taking away of a certain number of the best works would be an injury to a collection, and it would not do a corresponding amount of good to the country to which they were sent. It had been pointed out that at the present moment there was a movement on foot to increase the property of the Irish nation in works of art. It was clear, therefore, that the first step to be taken was to provide suitable buildings to receive works of art, and then it was more likely that works of art would be given to Ireland. As long as the art buildings remained in their present state there was no inducement to anyone to give works of art to Ireland.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) said he wished to put it plainly to the hon. Gentlemen sitting on the Treasury Bench that the Hibernian Academy was a disgrace to the country. Everybody who had the slightest acquaintance with the rudiments of art must be aware of the fact that there was no encouragement whatever given to an Irish artist in Ireland. And why? Because the provision for teaching art was not sufficient. Irish artists had first of all to produce "pot boilers," and then, when celebrity came to them, they had to migrate to England. Indeed, there was no room for art production in Ireland, and the blame of starving art in Ireland was due to the policy of the British Exchequer. Scotland received forty times as much from the Treasury as Ireland did for art education. He supposed it was because the majority of Irish Members were looked upon not as art critics but political critics. Those who had visited the Academy of Music and the Royal Hibernian Academy in Dublin would at once see that the Government did not foster art in Ireland. Those acquainted with the history of Ireland could not deny that Ireland had produced a much greater crop of first-class artists in proportion to its opportunities than this country had. He hoped the Treasury would raise no objection to the terms of this Motion, because it was a very reasonable one, and ought to be granted immediately. He hoped that all the art buildings would be put together and arranged in one artistic group so that those using them would be able to visit them together. Those who had studied the question knew that art entered very largely into commercial education in Ireland. In the manufacture of lace it was admitted that in artistic design the Irish people were ahead of England and Scotland, and they only wanted the opportunity of still further developing the artistic talents which undoubtedly were to be found in the Irish people. He recommended the Chief Secretary to spend an afternoon in the so-called Royal Hibernian Academy, and he would come back convinced that the sooner it was rebuilt the better it would be, not only for Irish art, but for the reputation of the British House of Commons, which was responsible for this state of things. The policy of starvation had undoubtedly kept art back in Ireland, and that policy had been adopted by this country in regard to everything artistic in Ireland. He had much pleasure in supporting the Motion, and he hoped the Secretary to the Treasury would not offer any objection to its adoption by the House.

MR. WYLIE (Dumbartonshire) said that in 1902 the Scottish Members found that Scotland was not getting its fair share from the Imperial Exchequer for art. Ireland during thirty-three years had got £34,000, while Scotland during forty-five years only got £6,000. The then Chancellor of the Exchequer, the right hon. Member for West Bristol said that the contributions from the Imperial Exchequer for art were in proportion to the local donations, and that Scotland showed parsimony in that respect. But the Scottish Members demanded a Commission on the subject, and the investigations of that Commission proved that, on the contrary, no country in the world had been so generous in its private contributions to art as Scotland. In Edinburgh one private person had given £60,000; the city of Edinburgh had given a site for £1,000 which was valued at £30,000; and Glasgow had, during the last twenty or thirty years, expended £750,000 between private munificence and municipal enterprise upon the development of art. Out of private munificence the citizens of Glasgow had erected the finest art gallery in the world. And this was the country which was held up to ridicule not many years ago for its parsimony in connection with art. He sympathised with the demand of the Irish Members. The truth was that in grants for art London was the great monopolist.

*MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.) said that he should like very briefly to support his hon. friend in the Motion which he had brought forward. He did not think the language which had been used was at all too strong in describing the extraordinary buildings in which certain of our Science and Art Institutions were housed. Certainly he did not think that his right hon. friend had exaggerated the dinginess of the surroundings or of the edifice itself in which the Royal Hibernian Academy was to be found, nor did he think anyone had described adequately the amazing condition in which the only public institution in Dublin prosecuting the art of music was to be found. He certainly thought that the transference of the College of Science to another building afforded a very proper and obvious means of providing an institution doing most excellent work with a building which would be more suitable to its requirements. He hoped the suggestions put forward by the mover of this Amendment would be favourably received by the Treasury. It would not cost a very big sum, and it was practically all that was asked by Ireland for the encouragement of the art of music.

If the Commission asked for was appointed it should be given as wide a scope as possible so as to include not only those institutions which had been mentioned but others also. At the present time the National Library in Dublin was suffering from many quite avoidable defects. Its accommodation, whether for books or readers, was wholly insufficient. If the Secretary of the Treasury would look at the reports presented by the trustees, he would find that the growth in the number of readers in that institution had increased in the most remarkable way from year to year, and he would find that, as compared with the total population of Dublin, it compared in the most striking and favourable way with such a place as the reading-room of the British Museum. The trustees had reported that the lighting was extremely bad and the electric lamps were almost worn out, and that there was not sufficient accommodation for the books. At the present time the hall of the library was full of immense packing cases containing the proceedings of a learned society in America which had been presented by that society, but for which the Library was quite unable to find room. The accommodation for readers, especially in the evening, was wholly insufficient. He understood that the original plan contemplated the erection of a wing which had not yet been built, though the building as it stood was quite unfit for its purposes. He did not ask the Secretary of the Treasury to give any pledge on the subject; he merely pointed to these facts as showing that any Commission which might be appointed should be given sufficiently wide powers to enable it to take into consideration all the institutions of science and art in Dublin. He did not know that it ought not also to take into consideration the present constitution and working of the Royal Irish Academy. There had been in many quarters great dissatisfaction with the working of that institution. That dissatisfaction was felt not by hostile critics, but by members of the Academy, who desired that a Commission should be appointed to consider the working of the institution. He heartily supported the Motion.

SIR J. STIRLING-MAXWELL (Glasgow, College) said that, as a Scottish Member, he felt that he owed hon. Members opposite an apology for intervening in the debate, but he assured them that he did so in a very friendly spirit, and with every desire to help them in the important movement of which he hoped the Motion would be provocative. He felt that both Scotland and Ireland had been starved in regard to the institutions which were the subject of the Motion, but in justice to Scotland he must say that the real difference between England and Scotland lay, not so much in the amount of money paid, as in what the character of that money was. The Scotch grant was not very large, but he thought it was equal to, if not larger than that received by Ireland, since the agitation on the question—an agitation which, he thought, had been successful. The great grievance was that the modest grant of £2,000 was not Imperial money at all, but money of which they should have, and he hoped would have, the capitalised value to spend on any building or public undertaking, while the charges now defrayed by the £2,000 a year would in decency have to be defrayed by the Treasury. In Scotland they were very grateful to Ireland for giving, a few years ago, the opportunity which led to a rather unwilling Chancellor of the Exchequer paying attention to their appeal. He could not say that either country had received anything like justice in this matter.

He did not presume to go into the details of the administration of the Irish institutions in question, but there were two things he should like to say. In the first place it was a very strange thing that in this country few people seemed to appreciate the importance of the subject, or to realise that the institutions now under discussion lay at the very root of the higher part of our commercial prosperity. If they dried up the wells of design their commercial prosperity would not be carried much further. It was of importance that every country should attend to this matter, but it was not attended to in the United Kingdom. We seemed to forget these things, but other countries did not forget them, and on the Continent, not only the capitals and great provinces, but the chief towns of every department, had institutions of which our Capitals would be very proud. In France and Italy, and even in such countries as Spain, these things were much better attended to than in this country. No people could take too much trouble in seeing that this class of institution was well managed. He did not say that these institutions in Ireland were not well managed—he believed most of them were well managed—but he did say that like institutions in Scotland had been worse managed than he had ever heard of in any country. They had a system under which one body threw a network over the great institutions of the kind included in this Motion and some others, and unfortunately it was a body of an extremely incompetent character. They had allowed these institutions to sink into a position which it was a scandal to witness. He was anxious to warn hon. Members opposite not to allow institutions of this kind to go under the management of such a body. In Scotland their institutions had sunk to an almost contemptible position through the neglect of the body who was supposed to look after them, and the effect had been that Scotland had received in the last twenty or thirty years much less than she should have received of public money. While Ireland was getting the equivalent of private gifts their stupid governing body in Scotland allowed such opportunities to pass. That was a warning to keep a strict eye on the governing body, and he hoped Ireland would not fall into difficulties from which Scotland was just beginning to emerge.

If a Committee was to be appointed for Ireland, he could not wish anything better than that they should have the same Chairman as they had in Scotland, namely, the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, who, by his perseverance and courage, had secured evidence and a Report which, it was to be hoped, would make a complete reform in these matters in Scotland. Some people seemed to think that matters relating to the adornment of life were, perhaps not trifling, but comparatively unimportant. He thought that was a very shallow view, and when he looked into history he felt convinced that that was the cause why Spain, once a great commercial country, had lost its commercial greatness. These were not trifling matters, for they related in a very true sense to our national work, and to the conditions on which our commercial prosperity in a great measure depended.

*MR. DOBBIE (Ayr Burghs) assured hon. Members from Ireland that the Scotch Members would do what they could to assist in getting this matter adequately settled. He was bound to say that the picture drawn by his hon. and learned friend gave too rosy a view of the relative financial position of Scotland and England, and perhaps even of Ireland. On some points Ireland was more favoured. He hoped that, if a Commission was appointed and there was a result favourable to Ireland, nothing definite would be done until the existing inequalities between Scotland and England had also been to some extent redressed. Reference had been made to the annual grant given to Scotland. That represented part of the repayment of a debt which was contracted at the time of the Union in return for burdens which were then imposed on Scotland, and the Report of the Departmental Committee bore out the view that in getting the £2,000 a year they were merely getting an annuity in respect of value given, and not getting a contribution from the Treasury. In regard to the £30,000 received by Scotland towards the cost of sites the House should bear in mind that it represented only a fifth of the value of the sites, and that four-fifths of the cost had come from private benefactions and the contributions of municipalities. As to the annual payment for maintenance he thought the treatment of Ireland compared favourably with that of Scotland. The figures for 1903 showed that while Ireland received several thousand pounds, Scotland only got £100. London got no less than £80,000. Looking at all these facts the House would realise that on the question of Treasury contribution Scotland had a great deal of leeway to make up before she could be said to be treated on favourable or just terms. He had received a print of a letter from Sir William Armstrong, director of the National Gallery of Ireland, in which that great authority on art said—

> "It is impossible to deny that Scotland, not the least artistic of the three countries governed from Westminster, has been treated very badly indeed by the central authorities. The whole blame for this must be borne by the Scottish representatives in Parliament."

He was unwilling to lie under that censure any longer, and he hoped the Scottish Members would soon get an opportunity of ventilating their grievance on this question. He hoped that the Commission proposed by his hon. friend would be appointed, and that it would result in a rearrangement of the grants to Ireland and Scotland, which would remove the present inequalities and give great satisfaction to both countries in this matter.

*MR. CUMMING MACDONA (Southwark, Rotherhithe) said the Royal Hibernian Academy had carefully preserved many valuable manuscripts, and he supposed the reason why they had not preserved or published a larger number was that they had not been given sufficient money to search the libraries of the Continent, where these magnificent manuscripts were to be found, having been lodged there for safety hundreds of years ago by the great chiefs of Ireland driven from their country by the ruthless marauders who invaded their territory from here in 1641, and the subsequent risings of an indignant race, famed all over Europe for their magnificent manuscripts and illustrious literature up till then carefully preserved by themselves. The hon. Member for Dumbartonshire, and the hon. Member for the College Division of Glasgow, had talked of the liberality of the Scotch people in supporting art, and they had also borne generous testimony to the position of Ireland in this matter, but both had admitted—and they were all agreed in this—that both countries had been treated very illiberally in the matter. If Scotland had been treated scantily, Ireland had, so far as he could see, been treated shabbily by the paltry grant given to it. The Academy had republished the Book of Ballymote, the Book of Kells, and a number of magnificent manuscripts in their charge. These were amongst the most magnificent productions in the world, full of the choicest gems of literature, and the rarest specimens of medieval illumination of the most brilliant and artistic description; and if funds could be provided to enable them to continue this work the House would be able to congratulate itself on having done a great deed.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.) said that before referring to the subject brought forward by the Resolution, he felt that he must touch on the aspersions cast on the Treasury by the mover in regard to the Royal College of Science in Dublin. In securing Sir Aston Webb as the principal architect of the Royal College of Science in Dublin, the Treasury had reason to congratulate themselves, for Sir Aston Webb had as great experience as any man in England. They had also availed themselves of the valuable services of an Irish architect. The clerk of the works, although he was by ancestry a Scotsman, had spent most of his business life in Ireland, and done a great deal of private and public work there. If they had gone outside Ireland for men in certain cases, he would point out that they were not the sole offenders in this respect. In *The Times* of the 2nd instant he read that the Dublin Corporation refused, by a considerable majority, to ratify the acceptance of proposed Irish contracts for cement and dustbins which were much higher than the lowest tenders. As far as was possible the Treasury would employ Irishmen and Irish materials.

He was unable to state definitely that night what were their intentions with regard to the allocation of the rooms within the new building of the Royal College of Science, Dublin, but he would give his most careful consideration to the subject, and would most willingly bear in mind the suggestions which had been made from various quarters of the House.

With reference to the main portion of the Resolution, a great many comparisons had been made during the debate between Scotland and Ireland. He noticed that there was a very formidable combination between representatives of Scotland and Ireland—whatever differences otherwise they might have—to make a raid on the Treasury. The success which had attended the efforts of his hon. friends from Scotland a few years ago had been quoted as an additional inducement to continue that course on both sides of the House. He had no doubt that on the next occasion when his hon. friends from Scotland desired to make another demand on the Treasury they would receive the same amount of generous assistance from hon. Gentlemen from Ireland as they were giving that night to their Irish colleagues. But he would tell the House that the benches were not so full at that moment as they would be on Monday and Tuesday of next week when they would be discussing the Second Reading of the Finance Bill. He dared say much would be heard from hon. Gentlemen opposite about the waste and squandering of the public money by the Government in all directions. It was very easy to talk of economy, but these small sums demanded for various purposes amounted to an enormous total. As to comparisons between what had been given to Scotland and Ireland, he was not sure that they were not dangerous to Ireland, for he could adduce figures which would go to show that Ireland at that moment was receiving more than Scotland. However, he thought that those who had instituted those comparisons had not taken sufficient account of the facts of the case. He believed it had not been sufficiently present to the minds of those who had made these comparisons that much had been done by various corporations, and by private individuals.

The wish had been expressed that night that better arrangements should be made for the housing of the Royal Hiberian Academy. He thought he could take it that there was a very general agreement on that point. But there were two possible objections to which he would like to refer. In cases where an institution receiving Government aid, and bringing a certain amount of traffic to the district in which it was situated, was suddenly transferred elsewhere, there was very often a considerable outcry in the locality from which the removal took place. He hoped he might take it that the Government would be free from attacks on that line. There had also been a good deal of criticism in the past, though he had not heard it in the case of Dublin, on plans for bringing all buildings of this nature within a small area. If anything were done to bring this academy nearer the other science and art buildings in Dublin, he hoped the Government would not be accused of improperly concentrating them in one comparatively small district.

He had given careful attention to the debate, and had noted a unanimous feeling in favour of inquiry. While unable, in any degree, to commit the Treasury to expenditure, he admitted that a case for inquiry had been made out. He was not at all sure that full value was obtained for the money expended. He, on behalf of the Government, would undertake that there should be an inquiry, though he was unable at the moment to describe the nature and scope of it. He gathered from what had been said that there was a desire that the inquiry should follow the lines of that which was held in reference to Scotland, and upon that he would consult with the Chief Secretary for Ireland and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Whether upon the Report of the tribunal the Treasury would be justified in making a further demand upon the taxpayers he could give no pledge;

he would agree there should be an inquiry, and later, by private communication with hon. Members, or discussion upon the Estimates, details should be arranged. Upon this assurance he hoped the Motion would be withdrawn.

MR. MOONEY said that after the speech of the hon. Gentleman he would withdraw his Motion on the understanding that the hon. Gentleman would do his best to appoint this Committee of inquiry in the same manner as the Committee had been appointed for Scotland. As to the *personnel* of the Committee, he would be perfectly satisfied if it were of the same stamp as the Committee for Scotland.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

ALIEN PILOTS.

SIR WILLIAM TOMLINSON (Preston) said the question he wished to bring before the House might be summed up in a few words. It was that the practice of granting certificates to aliens, enabling them to act as pilots in British waters, constituted a national danger, was an injustice to duly qualified British subjects, and ought to be discontinued This subject related to what was really a very anomalous state of things if the law in this country was compared with the pilotage law in all the other countries in the world. In proof of the dissatisfaction and alarm caused by the existing state of the law he would refer to certain circumstances which took place in March last.

Notice taken that forty Members were not present; House counted, and forty Members not being present.

The House was adjourned at twenty-eight minutes after Eleven of the clock till Tomorrow.

[APPENDICES.]

VOLUME 144.

BUDGET SPEECH, 1905.

ERRATUM.

In column 1050, line 20, for "6s. 9d. per proot gallon," *read* "6·9d. per proof gallon"; line 23, for "14s. 3d.," *read* "14·3d."

APPENDIX I.

ESTIMATES FOR CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, 1905–6.

Memorandum by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury.

I.—Civil Services.

1. The net total of the Estimates for Civil Services for 1905–6 is 28,614,221*l*. The net total of the original Estimates for 1904–5 was 27,983,920*l*. The increase is therefore 630,301*l*., of which 533,409*l*. arises under Class IV. Education, Science and Art). The balance of the increase is more than accounted for by the inclusion in the Estimates for 1905–66 of a Vote for deficiencies on the accounts of Savings Banks and Friendly Societies (146,989*l*.), no corresponding Vote having been taken in 1904–5.

2. In the following abstract and throughout the detailed Estimates comparison is made, according to the usual practice, with the total grants made for the service of the year 1904–5 in the session of 1904. Thus the figures for 1904–5 comprise, in addition to the original estimates for the year, Supplementary Estimates to the amount of 74,297*l*., which were voted in the summer of 1904. The result (after allowing for the transfer, for purposes of comparison, of the sum of 500*l*. from the Vote for the Post Office) is a net total for 1904–5 of 28,058,717*l*. On this basis of comparison the Estimates for 1905–6 show an increase of 555,504*l*.

3. The number of Votes is 105, being one more than the original number for 1904–5 In class V. the Vote for Uganda and East Africa Protectorates and Uganda Railway disappears, those services having been transferred from the Foreign Office to the Colonial Office as from 1st April next. They are, therefore, included in the Estimate for Colonial Services. In the same Class a Vote for a grant in aid to Cyprus has been added. In Class VI. an additional Vote appears for the deficiencies upon the last accounts of Savings Banks and Friendly Societies. No Vote for this service was taken in 1904–5, as the deficiencies on the accounts for 1903 were made good on a Supplementary Estimate at the close of 1903–4. An additional Vote appears also in Class VII. for a grant in aid of the expenses which may be incurred on the occasion of the visit to India of their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales. The Vote taken in 1904–5 to complete the grant-in-aid of the Royal Commission for the St. Louis Exhibition, 1904, no longer appears.

Class I.

4. The total sum required for Public Works and Buildings is 2,697,711*l*., being an ncrease of 74,393*l*. on the amount voted (including a Supplementary Estimate of ,450*l*. for Osborne) in 1904. The principal increases are in respect of Diplomatic and onsular Buildings (36,900*l*.), Revenue Buildings (37,900*l*.), and Rates on Government roperty (24,018*l*.). On the other hand, Railways (Ireland) show a decrease of 28,183*l*., ue mainly to the termination of the annuities to repay advances by the National Debt ommissioners for the purposes of the Light Railways (Ireland) Acts 1889 and 1893.

5. The increase under Diplomatic and Consular Buildings is due to the provision hich it has been found necessary to make for the purchase and adaptation of a house r His Majesty's Embassy at Madrid.

6. The increase under Revenue Buildings arises under Sub-heads K. and O. (Post Office and Telegraph Buildings), for which a provision of 400,000*l.*, as against 352,000*l.* in 1904–5, has been made. The amount is large, but, as explained in my memorandum on the Estimates last year, arrears which accumulated during the South African War have to be made up, in order to provide accommodation in many localities the expenditure for which was deferred owing to financial exigencies. It is hoped that, this has been done, the annual estimate for these works may be brought within more moderate dimensions. In the meantime 25,000*l.* less has been taken for Purchase of Sites under the Post Office Estimate (Sub-head H.), so that the net total addition on this account for 1905–6 is not more than 21,000*l.*

7. The increase of 24,018*l.* in the Rates Vote, following on an increase of 20,580*l.* in 1904–5, is due, as in past years, in part to the larger amount of Government property in respect of which contributions are made, and in part to the increased poundage of the rates themselves.

8. The original estimate for 1904–5 for Osborne was 15,100*l.*, but in the course of last session a Supplementary Vote of 5,450*l.* was taken, making a total provision of 20,550*l.* With the completion of the initial works and alterations which were necessary in adapting Osborne to the purposes of a convalescent home, a normal provision only is required, and the Estimate shows a net reduction of 200*l.* on the original Estimate for 1904–5.

9. There is an increase of 13,100*l.* on Public Buildings, Great Britain, accounted for mainly by increased charges in respect of annuities to repay advances by the National Debt Commissioners under the Public Buildings Expenses Act, 1903. Provision is made in the Houses of Parliament Buildings Estimate for an exceptional charge of 10,000*l.*, being a sum due to the London County Council in connection with the conveyance to H.M. Government of premises in Abingdon Street.

CLASS II.

10. The total estimate for salaries and expenses of Civil Departments is 2,738,163*l.*, being a net increase of 46,773*l.* on the amount voted (including Supplementary Grants of 3,090*l.*) in 1904. A transfer to Vote 34 of this Class (Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction) from Class IV., Vote 1 (Board of Education) of the sum of 2,679*l.* has been made in respect of the Geological Survey of Ireland.

11. The increase of 1,183*l.* and 2,440*l.* under the House of Lords and House of Commons Offices, respectively, is due almost entirely (as was the case in 1904–5, when the increase on the Estimate for the two offices was 13,871*l.*) to the decline in the amount realised from Private Bill Fees (appropriations in aid). To some extent this is attributable to the effect of recent legislation extending the system of Provisional Orders. The requirements of the Home Office show an estimated increase of 10,535*l.*, of which 6,500*l.* is in respect of contributions to Certified Inebriate Reformatories. There was an increase of the same amount under this head in last year's Estimate. Under Board of Trade there is an increase of 18,464*l.*, of which 8,862*l.* is due to further reorganisation of staff in the Patent Office, necessitated by the passing of the Patents Act, 1902. Provision has been made for strengthening further the staff of the Commercial, Labour and Statistical Department, and for the employment of Commercial Correspondents in British Colonies and possessions. An exceptional item of 4,250*l.* comes on the Estimate this year for costs in connection with the Port of London Bill during 1903–4 and 1904–5, which must now be charged to the Vote. Under Local Government Board, provision has been included for a special staff in connection with assistance rendered by that department to the local authorities in the administration of the Sale of Food and Drugs Acts. The increase of 3,746*l.* under Office of Works and Public Buildings arises to some extent from the necessity of strengthening

the staff to deal with the growing requirements of the Public Service, but is due more especially to the work in connection with Post Office and Telegraph Buildings. It is anticipated, however, that the whole of this increase may not be permanent. The increase of 3,211*l.* under Local Government Board, Ireland, includes provision which has been made for temporary assistance in connection with the relief of distress due to the partial failure of the potato crop in certain Western Districts of Ireland. The Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) shows an apparent decrease of 1,393*l.* This, however, is due to the transfer of 3,500*l.*, Grant in aid of Technical Instruction, to the Ireland Development Grant, so that there is an actual increase of 2,107*l.*, of which 1,000*l.* is in respect of the allocation of a larger proportion of the Swine Fever Grant to Ireland, the corresponding saving as regards Great Britain being shown under the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries. The Geological Survey of Ireland has been transferred from the Board of Education.

CLASS III.

12. Under the head of Law and Justice, the Estimates, at a total of 3,860,306*l.* show a net decrease of 21,547*l.* The principal decreases are 19,000*l.* under County Courts and 40,195*l.* under Royal Irish Constabulary. The principal increases are 20,681*l.* under Prisons, England and the Colonies, and 27,073*l.* under Irish Land Commission.

13. The growth of the Estimate for Prisons (England and Colonies) is due mainly to the increase of the number of prisoners in local prisons. There is a marked tendency to an increase in the number of summary commitments, which is made the subject of analysis and enquiry in the last Annual Report of the Prison Commissioners (§16–24)—Cd. 2273. More accommodation, especially in the Metropolis, is therefore required, and it is hoped that, when this has been provided, the expenditure under Escort and Conveyance, which continues to grow, may be reduced. An increased amount is taken for the provision of Officers' Quarters, and the Estimate for Pay and Allowances includes provision for the staffing of a new block at Aylesbury State Inebriate Reformatory and of the new Lunatic Asylum at Parkhurst.

14. The experience gained in the working of the Land Registry has made it possible to frame an Estimate without the large margin for increase of business hitherto provided, with the result that the Estimate shows a net reduction of 2,725*l.* The decrease of 19,000*l.* under County Courts is due to increased receipts (appropriated in aid of the Vote) anticipated. It is not possible, however, to frame a reliable estimate until experience has been gained of the effect of the County Courts Act, 1903, which came into operation on 1st January, 1905.

15. Of the increase of 27,073*l.* in the Estimate for the Irish Land Commission, 12,000*l.* is for additional staff in connection with the administration of the Land Act, 1903, and 15,000*l.* for increased provision (estimated at 25,000*l.*) for dividends and sinking fund on guaranteed stock created for the purpose of the Land Purchase Aid fund. A vacancy having occurred among the Commissioners, the numbers are reduced by one, as provided by Section 23 (7) of the Act.

16. The decrease of 40,195*l.* in the Estimate of the Royal Irish Constabulary, following on a decrease of 52,394*l.* last year, is the result of further reductions in the force which are being effected. The net increase of 6,954*l.* under Prisons, Ireland, is wholly due to an increase of 10,000*l.* in respect of maintainance of Criminal Lunatics. By a recent judicial decision in Ireland, it has been held that soldiers and sailors confined in district lunatic asylums in Ireland, who have been sent there as dangerous lunatics under Section 91 (2) of the Army Act, 1881, or Section 3 of the Naval Enlistment Act, 1884, are "Criminal Lunatics" within the meaning of the Lunacy (Ireland) Act, 1901, and, as such, must be maintained from public funds. Hitherto the charge on public funds has been confined in Ireland, as in England, to cases of

lunatics who have committed a crime, but it is now held that the interpretation section of the Irish Act has not been framed so as clearly to confine the charge on public funds to such persons, as is the case in the corresponding section of the English Criminal Lunatics Act of 1884. Provision is therefore now made to recoup the local authorities the expenditure which they have incurred on the maintainance of the lunatics other than criminal lunatics above referred to since 1st April, 1902, when the Lunacy (Ireland) Act, 1901, came into force.

Class IV.

17. The provision for Education, Science, and Art is estimated at a total of 16,328,947*l.*, being an increase of 533,409*l.* over the grants for 1904–5. The increase under Board of Education (England and Wales) is 416,790*l.*, and under Public Education, Scotland, 63,566*l.* The decrease of 1,904*l.* under Public Education, Ireland, is nominal only, the amount allocated to this service out of the Ireland Development Grant being increased by 14,412*l.* There is an increase of 46,100*l.* under Universities and Colleges, Great Britain, the grant in aid of certain colleges in Great Britain giving education of a University standard in Arts and Science being raised from 54,000*l.* to 100,000*l.*

18. Of the increase of 416,790*l.* under Board Education, the greater preparation must be described as automatic in character, due to the anticipated growth in the number of scholars in average attendance, and to the larger number of teachers for whose training provision is made by the State. The principal increase, 262,704*l.*, is in respect of the Elementary Education Grants. The sum taken under C. 5., Grants to School Boards, represents outstanding grants which are expected to become payable in 1905–6; the period for which, in pursuance of the Act of 1902, these grants are payable being concluded in September 1904. The increase 69,300*l.* under C. 6, Aid Grants to Local Education Authorities, is due to the Education Act, 1902, and the Education (London) Act, 1903, having now come fully into operation. (The aid Grant for Voluntary Elementary Schools disappears). A new sub-head has been opened (C. 7) for payments under the Education (Local Authorities Default) Act, 1904. The mount taken is nominal only, and represents the estimated amount required to meet the balance of advances over recoveries with which the Sub-head will be credited The increase, 34,048*l.*, under D.1., Grants for training of Teachers, is due to an increase in the number of students in Training Colleges, and the increase, 50,000*l.*, under D.3, Grants for Education and Training of Pupil Teachers, to the increased rates of Grant under the Regulations of 1904. The amount taken includes sums of 13,500*l.* and 6,500*l.*, transferred from Sub-heads E. and F.1, respectively, in consequence of the replacement of Science and Art grants for the instruction of pupil teachers by a higher rate of grant under the Regulations. A sub-head has for the first time been included in the Estimate (D.2) under which provision is made for assistance in furtherance of the building of Training Colleges. Under Sub-head E., Grants for Secondary Schools, the estimate is 242,500*l.*, an increase of 26,000*l.* due to the larger number of schools taking the ordinary course, and under F.1., Grants for Evening Schools, 390,000*l.* has been provided, an increase also of 26,000*l.*, due to the continuous development of the classes and the higher work done involving higher grants. There have been rearrangements of the Inspecting Staff of the Department, and the Staff ployed on the Irish Geological Survey has been transferred to the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland. The increase of 63,566*l.* under Public Education, Scotland, is due to similar causes, the principal increase being in respect of the Elementary Education Grants, due to the anticipated growth in the number of scholars in average attendance, and also to the higher average rate of grant earned, owing to an increase in the proportion of scholars between the ages of 12 and 14 for whom the higher rates are payable under the Code.

19. The Purchase Grant for the National Gallery has been increased this year by 2000*l.*, in order to provide the balance of the money required for the purchase of the

Titian "Portrait of Ariosto." The cost of the picture was 30,000*l.*, which has been met to the extent of 21,000*l.* through the generosity of private subscribers in the following contributions:—Lord Iveagh, 5,000*l.*, Mr. Astor, 5,000*l.*, Mr. Pierpont Morgan, 5,000*l.*, Lady Wantage, 2,500*l.*, Mr. Alfred Beit, 2,500*l.*, and Lord Burton, 1,000*l.*

20. With a view to the further development of the National Physical Laboratory, Parliament is being asked (under Scientific Investigation) to sanction an increase of 1,500*l.* on the grant in aid of salaries and other expenses of the Laboratory, and also an additional grant of 5,000*l.* in aid of new buildings and equipment for the same institution. Further provision is also included for investigations in connection with the North Sea Fisheries, as explained under Sub-head P. of the Estimate.

CLASS V.

21. The Estimates for Foreign and Colonial Services show a net decrease of 142,093*l.* on the total grants voted in 1904, the net decrease on the original Estimates (*i.e.*, after deducting the amount of the Estimate for the Treasury Chest Fund, a service for which the necessary provision cannot be determined until after the close of the financial year) being 93,093*l.* The amount required under Colonial Services (which, as mentioned above, includes the African Protectorates and the Uganda Railway annuities, is 1,266,703*l.*, being a net decrease of 99,418*l.* on the provision under the two Votes of last year. Under the Estimate for Telegraph Subsidies and Pacific Cable the grant-in-aid required to supplement the earnings of the Pacific Cable shows a reduction of 16,455*l.*, from 90,000*l.* in 1904–5 to 73,545*l.* in 1905-6. The reduction, however, in the Colonial contributions (a fixed proportion of the expenditure charged in the grant-in-aid in the preceding year) from 65,000*l.* to 59,000*l.* leaves the net decrease at 10,455*l.* No provision is being made for the subsidy of 4,375*l.* to the Eastern and Eastern and South African Telegraph Companies, as their position is now such that it is regularly refunded, in pursuance of the agreement referred to under the Credit Sub-head of the Estimate. The corresponding amount under that Sub-head is similarly omitted. A grant of 16,000*l.* in aid of the revenues of Cyprus is included in the present Estimates.

CLASS VI.

22. In this Class is included a Vote of 146,989*l.* to make good deficiencies on the income accounts of the funds for Savings Banks and Friendly Societies for 1904. The corresponding deficiencies on the accounts for 1903, amounting to 197,677*l.*, were voted on a Supplementary Estimate at the close of the financial year 1903–4. This Vote, together with an increase of 8,649*l.* under Superannuation and Retired Allowances accounts for the increase of 155,256*l.* on the Class, the other Votes showing, as usual, small decreases due to the cessation of expiring charges.

CLASS VII.

23. Miscellaneous Estimates show a decrease of 90,687*l.* There is a decrease of 17,696*l.* under Temporary Commissions, due mainly to the termination of the Royal Commissions on Coal Supplies and on London Locomotion. For the latter a small additional sum is required to complete.

The amounts written off the assets of the Local Loans Fund in 1904 are less by 4,944*l.* than in the preceding year. No further Vote is required for the St. Louis Exhibition, which accounts for a decrease of 70,000*l.* An Estimate of 20,000*l.* is included for the visit of their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales to India.

An Estimate for Repayments to the Civil Contingencies Fund will be presented, as usual, later in the Session, if necessary, when the amount to be made good to the fund has been ascertained.

II. REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

24. The net total of the Estimates for the Revenue Departments is 19,435,475*l.*, an increase of 629,328*l.* over the total for 1904–05.

25. The Estimate for Customs shows a net increase of 5,600*l.*, of which 5,019*l.* is due to increased charges for Superannuations. The Inland Revenue Estimate shows a net increase of 50,900*l.*, of which amount, however, 41,000*l.* is nominal only, and arises in consequence of the abolition of the use of over-printed stamps for official purposes, ordinary postage stamps being now used on payment. The estimated amount of such payments by Government Departments is taken as as credit under Subhead M. of the Post Office Vote. The real increase under Inland Revenue is therefore 9,900*l.*, which is accounted for by increments of salary and normal growth of business.

26. Postal Services (Post Offices, Packet Services and Telegraphs) together show an increase of 572,828*l.* against 298,827*l.* in the preceding year.

27. The increase under Post Office is 498,586*l.*, mainly owing to provision for proposed increases in scales of pay to Sorters, Telegraphists, Postmen, &c., to general expansion of business, increased remuneration to railway companies for conveyance of mails, and to the growth of superannuation charges. On the other hand 25,000*l.* less is provided for Purchase of Sites, pending the completion of necessary works in progress, as explained above under Class I, Estimates for Public Works and Buildings. The increase under Appropriations in Aid is nominal only, and arises in respect of payments from other Departments for postage stamps used for official purposes as mentioned under the Inland Revenue Estimate.

28. The Packet Service Estimate shows a net decrease of 3,820*l.*, but large variations appear under Sub-heads C. (America), E. (Asia and Australia) and G. (Appropriations in Aid). Under Sub-head C. provision is made for certain additional services, including the establishment of sea sorting on board packets between this country and the United States ; under Sub-head E., a decrease of 85,000*l.* is due to the termination of the contract with the Orient Steam Navigation Company, but there is also a decrease in Appropriations in Aid owing to the cessation of the Australian contribution towards the cost of the contracts with the Peninsular and Oriental and Orient Steam Navigation Companies. The decreased receipts from this source are in part counterbalanced by the increase due to the anticipated recovery from Ceylon, Straits Settlements and Hong Kong of the revised contributions due under an award given recently by Lord Balfour of Burleigh.

29. The Estimate for Telegraph Services shows an increase of 78,062*l.*, mainly due to provision for proposed increases of pay, growth of charges for the maintainance of the Telegraph and London Telephone systems, and to the increase in the terminable annuities issued in repayment of sums borrowed on Telephone Capital Account. The provision under Sub-head D. includes a sum of 150,000*l.* for the extension of the underground system to the north and towards the Kentish coast.

The Telegraph share of the expenses common to the Postal and Telegraph Services has, on fresh statistics, been reduced to 24 per cent. as against 25 per cent. in the previous year.

VICTOR C. W. CAVENDISH.

Whitehall, Treasury Chambers,

24 *February*, 1905.

APPENDIX I.

ESTIMATES FOR CIVIL SERVICES.

ABSTRACT of ESTIMATES for CIVIL SERVICES, Classes I. to VII., for 1905–6, compared with the GRANTS for 1904–5, voted in 1904.

TOTALS OF THE SEVERAL CLASSES.

No. of Votes.		CLASS.	1905–6.			1904–5. Grants in Session of 1904.			Net Estimates, 1905–6, compared with Grants, 1904–5.		Estimated Receipts (Cash and Stamps) not Appropriated in Aid of Votes.	
1904-5.	1905-6.		Gross.	Appropriations in Aid.	Net.	Gross.	Appropriations in Aid.	Net.	Increase.	Decrease	1905–6.	1904–5.
			£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.
15	15	I.	2,799,915	102,204	2,697,711	2,718,953	95,635	2,623,318	74,393	—	70	70
40	40	II.	3,316,885	578,722	2,738,163	3,279,127	587,737	2,691 390	46,773	—	452,984	436,166
22	22	III.	4,652,274	791,968	3,860,306	4,634,902	753,049	3,881,853	—	21,547	596,893	597,453
13	13	IV.	16,357,315	28,368	16,328,947	15,822,656	27,118	15,795,538	533,409	—	345	340
4	4	V.	2,077,235	164,040	1,913,195	2,227,479	172,191	2,055,288	—	142,093	125,215	3,215
4	5	VI.	816,649	147	816,502	661,393	147	661,246	155,256	—	—	—
6	6	VII.	264,797	5,400	259,397	355,584	5,500	350,084	—	90,687	—	—
104	105	£.	30,285,070	1,670,849	28,614,221 *	29,700,094	1,641,377	28,058,717 †	809,831	254,327	1,175,507 §	1,037,244

NET INCREASE - £555,504 INCREASE - £138,263

	£
The Total of the Net Sums which Parliament will be asked to Vote amounts as above (*) to - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -	28,614,221
Deduct,—Receipts as above (§) not appropriated in Aid of Votes - -	1,175,507
Estimated Net Expenditure for the Seven Classes, 1905–6 - £.	27,438,714

† The Amount of the Net Estimates for Civil Services, 1904–5 (Parliamentary Paper 75 of 1904), was - - - - - - - - - - - - -	27,983,920
Add,—Supplementary Estimates for Civil Services for 1904–5, included in the Appropriation Act, 1904 (*see* Parliamentary Paper 283 of 1904) - - - - - - - - - - - -	74,297
Transfer to Class I., Vote 8, from Revenue Departments, Vote 3 -	500
TOTAL - - £.	28,058,717

Whitehall, Treasury Chambers,
24th February, 1905.

VICTOR C. W. CAVENDISH.

APPENDIX II.

PUBLIC BILLS

DEALT WITH IN VOLUME CXLV.

Those marked thus * are Government Bills. The figures in parentheses in the last column refer to the page in this volume. "[H.L.]" following title indicates that the Bill originated in the Lords.

(A.) HOUSE OF LORDS.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
*Army Annual	*Earl of Donoughmore*	All Stages, 13th April (5) Royal Assent, 14th April (189)
Closing of Licensed Premises (Christmas Day) (Ireland)		Read 1ª 13th April (5)
*Criminal Cases (Reservation of Points of Law) [H.L.]	*Lord Chancellor*	Read 2ª 9th May (1297)
Intoxicating Liquors (Hours of Closing) [H.L.]	*Lord Archbishop of Canterbury*	Read 1ª 13th April (4)
*Naval and Military Medals [H.L.]	*Earl of Donoughmore*	Read 1ª 8th May (1099)
Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) [H.L.]	*Lord Monkswell*	Read 1ª 13th April (4)
Polling Arrangements (County Councils)	*Lord Monkswell*	Read 1ª 13th April (4)
*Workmen's Compensation	*Lord Belper.*	Committee, 9th May (1269)

(B.) HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
*Agricultural Rates Act, 1896, &c., Continuance	*Mr. Long*	Read 2º 17th April (328) (401) Committee, 10th May (1486)
*Aliens	*Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas*	Read 1º 18th April (462) Read 2º 2nd May (687) (768)
*Army (Annual)	*Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster*	Royal Assent 14th April (231)
Cottage Homes	*Mr. John Hutton*	Read 1º 3rd May (826)
*County Courts (No. 2)	*Mr. Attorney-General*	Read 1º 17th April (328)
*Education (Scotland)	*The Lord Advocate*	Read 2º 8th May (1149) (1214)

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Education (Provision of Meals) (No. 2)	*Mr. Arthur Henderson*	Read 1° 3rd May (826)
Elementary Education (Feeding of Children) (No. 2)	*Mr. Hay*	Read 1° 3rd May (827)
Factory and Workshop Act (1901) Amendment	*Mr. Cameron Corbett*	Read 1° 5th May (1087)
*Ferries (Acquisition by Local Authorities)	*Mr. Grant Lawson*	Read 1° 19th Aug. (609)
*Finance	*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*	Read 1° 3rd May (859)
Land Drainage and Sewers	*Mr. Harold Reckitt*	Bill withdrawn 4th May (1020)
Land Values (Assessment and Rating)	*Sir John Brunner*	Read 2° 14th April (207)
Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland)	*Mr. Hunter Craig*	2nd Reading defeated 5th May (1032)
*Lunacy	*Mr. Attorney-General*	Read 1° 17th April (327)
Lunacy Acts Amendment (London)	*Sir John Tuke*	Bill withdrawn 14 April (207)
Lunacy Acts Amendment (London) (No. 2)	*Sir John Tuke*	Read 1° 18th April (458)
Metropolitan Borough Councils Association	*Capt. Jessel*	Read 1° 9th May (1468)
Motor Car (Alien Drivers) Licences	*Mr. Scott Montagu*	Read 1° 9th May (1353)
*Post Office (Money Orders)	*Lord Stanley*	Read 1° 2nd May (687)
Public Roads (Ireland)	*Mr. O'Dowd*	Read 2° 17th April (419)
Resident Magistrates (Belfast)	*Mr. Wolff*	Read 1° 4th May (939)
Small Holdings	*Mr. Channing*	Bill withdrawn 13th April (187)
Small Holdings (No. 3)	*Mr. Channing*	Read 1° 18th April (458)
*Unemployed Workmen	*Mr. Gerald Balfour*	Read 1° 18th April (459)
Winter Assizes (Ireland)	*Mr. Wolff*	Read 1° 4th May (939)

APPENDIX III.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, SESSION 1905.

List of Rules, Orders, &c., which have been presented during the Session, and are required by Statute to lie for an appointed number of Days upon the Table of the House.

In Continuation of List given in preceding Volume.

Title of Paper.	Date from which the Period runs.	Period to lie upon the Table.
Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Act, 1877 (Oxford).—Copy of Statutes made by the Governing Body of St. John's College, Oxford, on 7th December 1904 (i.) amending Statute III. (12); and (ii). amending Statutes V. and XV. of the Statutes of the College [40 and 41 Vic., c. 48, s. 49]	13 April	12 weeks
Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Act, 1877 (Oxford).—Copy of Statute made by the Governing Body of Christchurch, Oxford, on 7th December, 1904, amending Clause 3 of the Statutes of the House concerning Westminster Scholarships [40 and 41 Vic., c. 48, s. 49]	13 April	12 weeks
College Charter Act, 1871 (University College, Sheffield).—Copy of Application received from the University College, Sheffield, for the Establishment of a University in Sheffield, referred by His Majesty in Council for the Consideration and Report of a Committee of His Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council; together with a Copy of the Draft of the Charter applied for [34 and 35 Vic., c. 63, s. 2]	13 April	30 days
Inebriate Reformatories (Regulations).—Copy of Regulations made with the approval of the Secretary of State for the Home Department for the management and discipline of the certified Inebriate Reformatory at Cattal, near York [61 and 62 Vic., c. 60, s. 21 (1)]	17 April	4 weeks (whilst the House is sitting)
Board of Education.—Copy of Draft Amending Order No. 1 of the Board of Education, amending Final Order No. 391 under Section 11 (8) of The Education Act, 1902 [2 Edw. VII., c. 42, s. 11 (8)]	2 May	30 sitting days
Public Records (Fines and Recoveries).—Copy of Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes of Documents connected with the Alienation of Land by means of Fines and Recoveries, which are now in the Public Record Office, but are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation therein [40 and 41 Vic., c. 55, s. 1]	2 May	4 weeks
Union of Benefices Act (Saint Paul, Covent Garden, with Saint Michael, Burleigh Street).—Copy of Scheme under The Union of Benefices Act, 1860, for effecting an Union of the Benefices of Saint Paul, Covent Garden, with Saint Michael, Burleigh Street [23 and 24 Vic., c. 142, s. 15]	8 May	Two months
Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Act, 1877 (Oxford).—Copy of Statute made by the Governing Body of St. John's College, Oxford, on 20th January 1905, amending Statutes III. and XVI. of the Statutes of the College [40 and 41 Vic., c. 48, s. 50]	10 May	12 weeks

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[AUTHORISED EDITION].

FIFTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1905.

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Where in the Index * is added with Reading of a Bill, or a Vote in Committee of Supply, it indicates that no Debate took place on that Stage of the Bill, or on that Vote.

Subjects discussed in Committee of Supply are entered under their headings, and also under Members' Names, without reference to the actual Vote before the Committee.

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Lord Chancellor
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Lord Chancellor of Ireland
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Lord Chief Justice
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Lord Great Chamberlain
Marquess of Cholmondeley.

Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland
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Secretary of State for India
Rt. Hon. W. St. John Brodrick.

Secretary (Chief) for Ireland
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